

# SEVEN DAYS

Who will be  
Vermont's  
next auditor?  
Scrutinizing  
the scrutinizers

BY KIM PICARD FIER

## 'HOOD WORKS

BTV's housing  
boom  
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A read on the  
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## VPR'S JAZZ SEGUE

Resident Jackson  
takes the mic  
PAGE 19

# CRUNCH TIME

**Untitled Project:  
SEASONAL ECONOMIES**

Conrad Bakker



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## Losing a Landmark

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**R**outine 3 a.m. landmark — or anyone depending on your point of view — closed each when meeting criminal costs the former Harbor Hotel & Ritz restaurant and its bar, the Ritz night house. Once the semi-annual restaurant in the Harbor Hotel & Ritz opened as a hot dog stand, it didn't employ the 1960s hot grown into an early mid-century filled with acoustic materials. The building fell into disrepair after the restaurant closed in 1967. At 22½ feet, Kathryn Flagg reported last week on Off Mainline, Seven Days' police and news blog, owner Nina Simone sold the property to the city of Baltimore. When plans to expand its as a terrible disaster, John O'Neil, whose family owned the restaurant, died at the restaurant as a child and never missed being allowed to leave his family table to go to the bar or a collection of women, guns, and drugs and violence with the institution for

Outfit Told Flagg he is more excited than you're  
ful about the Harbor Made A-Wagh-domic. "This is like a  
Greening Day on steroids," he said after hoisting a few more  
pieces of battered antique furniture from the smashed  
building.

Seven Days multimedia producer Ewa Sulbarger put filmed the demolition for this week's episode of "Stuck in Vietnam" and she knitted together a pile of old photographs and stories about the Harbor Hole. A Way "The Hole-A-Way became a popular restaurant known for its eccentric décor and tasty vittles, serving regulars and out-of-towners alike," says Sulbarger. "Even Katharine Hepburn and Bob O'Connell are said to have stopped by for a bite."



They identify *isole* as *Wey* in the *isogloss*.



broader than just egg and

## facing facts



www.nccf.ca

Quibon: a new government will shut down Genital-2 – the latest take place in Hertfordshire.



## GRABBY READ

A bear wandered onto UVM's campus last week and died in a Dumpster. Most have had the experience.



**BEER SCIENCE**

After a lackluster 2011, Vermont's in store for a bright fall sports season. Bring on the falling leaves!



## SHOOTING

**THE GUN**  
A Lemberger  
man is facing 30  
years in prison  
for shooting up a  
water-treatment  
plant. Turned out  
to be a woman who

**PLACING FACTS IN CONTEXT**

There's how many people donated to the conservative super PAC *Veritas* here First, according to this month's political fundraising reports. The sole donor is *Lance Broughton* of *Washington*, who gave \$100,000 to the group.

## TOP FIVE

ACCEPTED FOR PUBLICATION

- **"Green Times Versus Debt: Should We Abolish the New Green Government?"** by Jim Peaco: Do negotiations to the north drive a new movement, led by a vibrant new party.
- **"Link to Your Health?"** by Carol Hirsch: Try these recipes for antibiotic drugs that are good for your health.
- **"The Realities of a Challenging and a Proposed Power Loss in West Virginia"** by Ben Hirsch: Greenhouse gas emissions are taking hold in the west, but the proposal for a new multi-village movement is in the works.
- **Four Years "Big, Big, Attack!"** by Paul Hirsch: We stand now when they are on their knees. They are making us more, but super-facts are making us more, but super-facts are making us more, but super-facts are making us more.
- **Black in Vermont: "Harmless in Vermont"** by Jonathan Hirsch: A new Vermont-based movement is growing, and a new Vermont-based movement is growing.



tweet of  
the week:

**References**

Stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic at 70 a.m. on I-95. It's 100¢. Happens every time. Really stressful. But it's worth it.



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and Fung (1992), [edwardfung@uic.edu](mailto:edwardfung@uic.edu), Fung (1997).

[illegible]

1000

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**Bob  
Newhart**

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2012  
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& the  
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## REVIEW IS WRONG

The August 11 review of our Gang of Thieves double EP was cruel, dismissive and flaccid. Reviewer Seth Hood makes us out to be a bunch of drug-smoking, not worth listening to unless you smoke marijuana.

Many of Hood's comments are misinforming, unfair and deceptive. He writes, "Gang of Thieves have got to be a weed-flecked celtic, as lyrics like these suggest: 'Super asleep on your trunk / Night on time, along your problem money.'" This line in "Mighty Man" is the only reference to pot in the whole EP. Hood also writes, "Hood has a hell of a sense of humor interpreting any of the EP's stoner lyrics as less than optimistic (Show me love, Mighty Man / Lead me with positive action)." "Gettin' high" and "Goodin' for" are both stonemans and not even close to optimistic or "stoner."

It is obvious Hood didn't even listen to the other songs, as he continues to only mention lyrics and inaccurate material references to the first track, "Mighty Man," throughout the entirety of the article (such as claiming there is "more than a little weed-wreck" when there is actually none on the entirety of the EP is none just one example).

We are proud to be a Washington local rock-and-roll band, but admitted of how we were presented in this *Seven Days* article. Hood generalized our band based on one track, one line of lyrics, and the dried leaflets Tobin and I sport. I would want much more about this, but unfortunately I am already over 200 words. I sincerely ask for a new review by someone else, reflecting the accuracy of Hood's article. Thanks for your time.

Michael Reik  
STARBUCKS

## ANIMALS DESERVE PROTECTION

Aren't there enough endangered people in Vermont to demand laws that will provide protection for our animals? Animal Cruelty Charges Dropped Against Chad Blomane Spence (Herald), August 20th. Prosecutors shouldn't have such difficulty getting these cases dropped and provide some to prevent citizens from having any further opportunity to harm other animals. They also need to be held accountable to reimburse people for the costs of caring for abused animals. Animals are the taxpayers, too, even when our protection from all forms of abuse.

Kay Mitchell  
HINESBURG

## HALF-LIFE, WHOLE UNTRUTH

Denying the truth about the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant ("Truth Is Back: The Republican Candidate for Attorney

General Milton Ha Case," September 12), Jack Mickelson is quoted as saying, "You could drink a glass of uranium 30 seconds after it came out of the tap. It has a half-life of seconds, milliseconds." The implication of his remark is that virtually all the uranium would have decayed away in 30 seconds. Unfortunately, Mickelson underestimated the half-life of uranium by a factor of almost a billion. The half-life of uranium is about 4.5 years (or about 381,000,000 seconds), and almost all of it would there after 30 seconds.

Mr. Mickelson defends continued operation of the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant by saying, "We have a trillion look-to-do 29 other reactors in the American nuclear fleet." The apparent implication is that tritium leaks are OK since lots of other reactors also leak tritium. It is not logical to suggest that if the same problem has occurred in several reactors, it must not be a significant problem. I assume, if elected state general, he wouldn't accept the argument that a bank robber should not be prosecuted because lots of other people rob banks, too.

Although Mr. Mickelson is identified in the article as having worked as a technical manager for the navy's nuclear program, his expertise as the areas of tritium and the safety of nuclear plants seems questionable.

George Flynn  
PLATTSBURG, NY  
Flynn is a professor of physics at Plattsburgh State University.

## ROADS LESS TRAVELED

I believe that Jeremiah (Herald) is referring to the Stage Road in Jericho (Herald, "My God, the Transit" September 8). It is not a new road. In fact, my grandfather used to drive a stage on that road in the 1900s. It goes to West Bottom, 111 East 11th Street Road, but is the North Road (currently in Berlin) or even Stage Road. It just will not call it Stage Road, the other two fairly steep roads going north will handle 2 in the Adirondack area, they have also been closed since we before French descent — even before automobiles.

Patty Sawanna  
HUNTINGTON

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## FUN STUFF

straight cool  
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quizzes/links  
kites, food and  
kiss right!>  
think classics  
the modern world  
bull the stomach  
red neck/very sexual  
attention of  
parents

## CLASSIFIEDS

38 vehicles  
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53 services  
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61 jobs



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1

SATURDAY 22

**Loud and Proud**

In honor of the first day of fall, means one thing: It's time to wear your pride on your sleeve. In *Pride Vancouver Festival*, now an annual affair, takes over the Queen's City Square. *Beauty Boomer* theme: Join the parade Saturday, or head up a member of *Boomer* in-friendly music shows throughout the week.

SEE CALENDAR LISTINGS ON PAGE 58

# the MAGNIFICENT

MUST SEE MUST DO THIS WEEK

COMPILED BY CHARLIE FOX

7

2

SUNDAY 23

**Got Milk?**

"Got of Aged Gomer & Gertie" is a weekly comic-adventure magazine. Gertie where the *Milk Carton* Readers' Forum, "Gomer's Got a Reading," will allow readers to discuss it. It's simple — just become a member — with stunning illustrations at the Higher Ground Brownies Lounge.

SEE MUSIC SPOTLIGHT ON PAGE 10

3

FRIDAY 21-SUNDAY 23

**Booty Call**

Any? Really turned around? *Booty Call* is a weekly comic-adventure magazine. Gertie where the *Milk Carton* Readers' Forum, "Gomer's Got a Reading," will allow readers to discuss it. It's simple — just become a member — with stunning illustrations at the Higher Ground Brownies Lounge.

SEE CALENDAR LISTINGS ON PAGE 58

4

FRIDAY 21-SUNDAY 23

**Fully Booked**

Calling all artists: The *Washington Book Festival* gives you the opportunity to read into the written word this weekend. In fact, it's hard to miss the massive three-day expo of artists, workshops, book signings and panel discussions headed by local luminaries. Write on.

SEE STORY COVERAGE AND CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 58

5

FRIDAY 21

**Kiss Me Kate**

Shakespeare's story of a woman who refuses to be "tamed" might take a few updates today — but, at *delicatessen*.

*Taming of the Shrew* is just another delicious hot dog drama. *delicatessen* Campy consumed for its creative interpretations of the classics makes the lovers better downright hip in this updated touring production.

SEE CALENDAR LISTINGS ON PAGE 58

6

FRIDAY 21-SUNDAY 23

**Sweet Symphony**

Inspiring the foliage, the *Vancouver Symphony Orchestra* comes up a colorful classical program in the *Music in Vancouver Music Festival*, touring the state through October 1. Works by Michael Haydn, Brian Shostakovich, David Pearsall and Franz Schubert strike the right note: multi-tones, Virginia and Doris Line this week.

SEE CALENDAR LISTINGS ON PAGE 58 &amp; 60

7

FRIDAY 21 &amp; SATURDAY 22

**No Strings Attached**

Great Barbara's Rhyming, a weekly comic-adventure magazine, is set in the 19th century. *Barbara's Rhyming* is a weekly comic-adventure magazine. Gertie where the *Milk Carton* Readers' Forum, "Gomer's Got a Reading," will allow readers to discuss it. It's simple — just become a member — with stunning illustrations at the Higher Ground Brownies Lounge.

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## Who's Chummy With Shummy

**G**OV. PETER SHUMLIN got all hot and bothered last week when his Republican opponent, Sen. RANDY BROOK (R-Freelands), suggested in a Vermont Public Radio debate that the governor took campaign contributions in return for special favors.

"Let me just say, Randy that I don't accept campaign contributions in return for anything," Shumlin said. "This is not Chicago, Period. So to answer your question, no, I would never make a campaign contribution request — and I know you're trying to make many of them and I'm trying to make many of them — in return for anything." I should certainly hope not! That would be, um, illegal.

But despite Shummy's insistence that he doesn't do *nothing* for *no*body in return for campaign cash, the special-interest dough keeps rolling in. Of the \$841,806 he raised last month, a full \$518,000 of it came from special-interest groups and corporations — most of which are based outside Vermont.

To put it in perspective, that's more than special-interest cash than Brock's entire \$62,000 haul during his bid in the same period. Granted, Brock's not doing too hot in the money department.

Of the million dollars Shumlin has raised throughout his reelection campaign, \$36,000 comes from issue advocacy groups, \$54,000 from unions and a whopping \$541,806 from corporations.

What is weird, since Shummy says he doesn't think corporations should be running the political show. Just two weeks ago, the gov was telling liberal radio host STEPHANIE MILLER during an interview at the Democratic National Convention that "if the people vote, we win, and if the campaign team votes, [the Republicans] win."

What he didn't say: If the corporations give, here's where they can send a check.

To clear things up, we asked Shumlin's campaign manager ALAN MAGLIERA whether the gov believes corporations are people. "His [brother-in-law] Steve heard him and I say several times that he believes the Citizens United decision should be overturned," she said.

So why does he take all that cash from corporations?

"Vermont law allows us to do so," she said. "And we play by the rules."

But wouldn't he rather corporations build on to the dough and let the people vote — where, duh, duh — politicians?

"In Vermont, we think the \$3000 corporation limit is fair," Magliera said. "Again, at the federal level, he does believe they play an outsized role through the Citizens United decision."

So just what sending the checks Shummy's way?

Last month, the gov took contributions from 30 companies, prior to that, another 73 had given to his campaign. Among them are a few homegrown Vermont businesses such as Liberty Express of St. Albans (\$50K), Stowe Tree Experts (\$25K) and Vermont Farmstead Defense Woodcock (\$230K). Others are a little less local: VISA (\$200K), DIRECT Network (\$200K) and Goshen Farms of Florida (\$200K).

Some are somewhat in between. Five Florida-based companies owned by **FRANK SINI** — a real estate developer who lives part time in South Woodstock — gave Shumlin a combined \$180,000. Singh and his wife, **ANN JOHNSON**, each gave another \$200K to the gov for a grand total of \$14,000.

**SHUMLIN'S RIGHT:  
WE'RE NOT IN CHICAGO.  
ONLY IN VERMONT ARE POLITICIANS  
IN THE POCKET OF BIG BONG.**

Driving the interest of corporations who give to politicians is always a tricky thing because, of course, they're not going to admit to carrying favor. But a number of Shumlin's recent contributions have plenty of skeletons below the State of Vermont.

Shumlin's Newsworlds (\$300K) is seeking to build wind towers in southern Vermont. Battelle's amorphous Castle enterprises (\$400K between two companies) contract with the state. Corrections Corporation of America's (\$300K) takes care of Vermont inmates at a Newbury prison. And Florida-based Rapid USA Consulting (\$100K) hosted Shumlin at an EB-5 visa conference in Miami last November and, until recently, worked to secure foreign investment in Jay Peak (\$100K).

But if you ask Shumlin why they're giving to Shummy, she'll tell you, "Many of them agree with the governor's vision and agenda in Vermont to create jobs and more economic opportunities for Vermonters." (bet)

At least with unions and advocacy groups, you know what they're looking for. From Shumlin, they seem to want jobs, death and pot. Throughout the campaign, the gov has received \$3000 from three trade groups representing alcohol wholesalers and distributors, \$5000 from Patient Champs of Vermont, which supports physicians' assisted suicide, and \$10,000 from liver groups that want weaker drug laws. And

that doesn't include the \$300K he took from Woodbury Media, whose website connects petbirds with marijuana dispensaries.

Which brings us back to that VER debate.

Brock was specifically criticizing Shumlin for his promise to push for the decriminalization of marijuana in Vermont in a fundraising call to the head of the pro-pot group NORML, as the Burlington Free Press reported last month. In a blog post, NORML's executive director wrote that, in his conversations with the gov, Shumlin expressed a desire "to become a national spokesperson for cannabis law reforms before the Congress and Executive branch."

Shummy's right. We're not in Chicago. Only in Vermont are politicians in the pocket of Big Bong.

Of course, the gov doesn't see it that way. As Shumlin liberally explained during the VER bid, all he promised during that NORML fundraising call was to "go anywhere, anytime that I can get there, in light for what I believe is right. Which is crushing down on drugs that are killing people — that are leading to crime and addiction — and decriminalizing and stopping the crazy resources and misallocations that we're currently doing to fight some amounts of marijuana."

Sounds like at least one Shumlin donor is getting what it paid for.

### Broughton's Bucks

Last week, we told you about the anti-incumbent new conservative super PAC that plunked down at least \$70,000 on television advertisements backing Republican candidates and crushing "Wet bills to go on, political personalities speculated that the group, Vermonters First, was drawing funding from out-of-state sources, such as the Republican Governors Association or the Republican National Committee.

As it turns out, the super PAC's sole funder is one **LAUREN BRIGHTON**, who hails from some other than the Queen City.

Told about helping local.

According to the group's first campaign finance report, Brighton donated \$100,000 to Vermonters First last month. Nearly all of that cash immediately went to a two-week ad buy. Two 15-second commercials took state treasurer candidate **HEATHER WILSON** and state auditor candidate **BRUCE LALAN** — both Republicans. A third, all-second spot, which debuted that week, rails against "the Democrats" and their "apocalyptic single-paper health care plan."

But who is **LAUREN BRIGHTON**, 13300, Lenore Brighton?



# Three Years Later, Burlington Telecom Is Still Stuck on Pause

BY KEVIN J. KELLEY



**T**hree years after the fast dissolution of Burlington Telecom's financial crisis, the city-owned utility has made no progress toward repaying its unamortized \$16.9 million debt to local taxpayers.

The city's effort to devise a new BT ownership arrangement also appears stalled. Potential investors won't make a deal until a federal court rules on whether City Capital can represent the utility, servers, rats and bolts that make up BT's network, and making maybe several months away.

The business is being run more offensively under the management of the Dorman & Fawcett BT financial advisory firm, and the number of BT subscribers has soared up in recent months. But under the current circumstances, a major growth spurt doesn't look likely. BT can't afford to conduct a marketing campaign to compete

with its primary competitor, Comcast. Nor does it have the money to complete the state-mandated build-out of its fiber-optic infrastructure to serve every residence, building and institution in the city.

The utility's fiscal overview has fallen into inaction and disarray. Peter Jewett, the chairman of the Burlington Telecom Advisory Committee,

quit last week — mainly out of frustration, he says, that the Wardsboro administration and the city council have been unwilling to work to pressure Burlington Telecom as a publicly owned utility. Jason Linker, another member of the same panel, complains of a soulless watchdog that doesn't even receive thorough and timely financial reports from BT.

"I'm angry because of a degree of frustration over our unclear role," explains Jewett. The seven-member advisory group

was established by the city council in 2008 to function like one of the citizen commissions that oversee city departments. But, Jewett says, "we've been superseded by the Blue Billion Committee" created by the council in 2008 to assess BT's financial status and examine options for pulling the utility out of the hole into which it had tumbled.

Meanwhile, the Blue Billion Committee, which issued a financial report early in 2010, hasn't met for three months. And it, too, lacks clear direction, according to its chairman, Champlain College finance chief David Provost. "Our assigned role now is to find potential investors in BT," Provost says. "But there haven't been any potential investors to see."

Provost says he'll be seeking third criticism from Mayor Miro Weinberger regarding the committee's future. "We're glad to help if we can," Provost comments, "but we need to know how."

Jewett says the "biggest problem" that

led him to leave the unpaid advisory post is that "the city has turned its back on keeping BT under public oversight." The Blue Billion Committee's report concluded that full public oversight had become an unworkable option for BT.

Jewett maintains that the telecom and utility should be controlled in the same way as the local electric and water utilities — by the people of Burlington via their elected representatives. He says city officials should "don't seem to realize we have a world-class network under our feet and should not let it go."

It's already gone, responds city council president Josh Shattam, a Ward 5 Democrat. "I, too, would have liked to see BT operate as a publicly owned entity, but we squandered that opportunity," Shattam says. She points to the mountain of debt incurred by BT as violation of state regulations. "It's not that we don't philosophically think it should be publicly owned," Shattam adds. "It's that \$12 million debt."

Weinberger suggests in an e-mail message that full public ownership of BT is not a good idea. He says he's unwilling to spend "substantial precious taxpayer dollars gambling on the future of a telecommunications company."

City Councilwoman Paul, a Ward 6 independent and member of the city's Board of Finance, says she and other officials involved in negotiations with potential BT partners or investors "want to find the most positive outcome for BT and for residents of Burlington." City officials are "clearly committed to maintaining the service we have in place," Paul adds. "But we don't know what form that will take."

Weinberger offers assurance that the "there's been quite a lot of activity involving potential partners" but he says he can't be more specific due to nondisclosure pledges agreed by all parties in these negotiations.

Weinberger, Jewett, chief, Burlington Telecom is an illiterate, but he does acknowledge that "clearly, the city's finances will not get out from underneath a cloud unless there's a resolution for BT." Not only did the mismanaged telecom operation show the city's leaders the financial disaster has raised Burlington's cost of borrowing. Will Street rating agencies have three times downgraded the city's bond rating, mainly because the utility has no clear path to repaying the \$16.9 million loaned to it.

At some point, the BT model will come to be seen as Weinberger's responsibility, and not so much that of his predecessor, Bob King, just as President Barack Obama now shoulders some blame for the dismal economy he inherited from George W. Bush.

"We will continue to aggressively pursue the recovery of as much of the BT

## POLITICS

million spent by the prior administration is possible," Weinberger pleads.

The bid, according to city sources, A deal can't get done until there's a ruling on the federal lawsuit filed a year ago by Citic Capital. The municipal finance arm of Citic bank want to sue to force Burlington to either pay up on its \$33.5 million lease-purchase agreement or to give back the equipment that enables the utility to generate. No one wants to take over a business that may get whacked by the repo man.

The suit, over which Judge William K. Sessions III is presiding, is just entering its discovery phase.

The court did approve an interim agreement in March whereby Burlington Telecom has agreed to find a sale a portion of its monthly cash flow to pay down the \$33.5 million that Citic Capital says it is owed. The agreement stipulates that BT must first use available monthly funds to cover the interest on the \$36.9 million borrowed from the city's cash pool.

**THE HOLDUP ON BT, ACCORDING TO CITY SOURCES: NO ONE WANTS TO TAKE OVER A BUSINESS THAT MAY GET WHACKED BY THE REPO MAN.**

A full monthly payment for that purpose would amount to about \$29,000, city attorneys calculate. After that payment is put into an escrow account, the court agreement obligates BT to pay any remaining cash on hand to Citic Capital.

Figures provided by BT interim general manager Stephen Bernier suggest that Burlington Telecom might be able to pay as much as \$440,000 a month on the \$33.5 million loan. Under that best-case scenario, it would still owe more than 65 years for BT to cover the full amount of its lease-purchase deal with Citic Capital.

In each of the past two months, however, BT has paid nothing close to \$440,000. Documents provided by its attorney for Citic Capital show BT wrote checks totaling about \$100 for July and August combined. At that rate, BT would be paying Citic Capital for the next six and a half millennia.

The city is simultaneously fighting off a suit in Chittenden Superior Court demanding that it and former chief administrative officer Jonathan Leopold make good on the \$36.9 million in borrowings from the city's cash pool. Norm Williams, the attorney for the new Republican former city councilors who trained the action, says a decision could come soon.

There's actually a simple way to keep up the city name, Williams suggests. He says the city should in effect acknowledge wrong doing by Leopold and agree that he should not be able to sue. Williams claims the city is a private insurer. Travelers, would cover the liability without affecting taxpayer Leopold himself probably wouldn't have to pay anything, Williams contends.

Weinberger wouldn't comment on an option that could be seen as protecting BT with a get-out-of-jail-free card. The mayor says he can't speak publicly about pending lawsuits.

But Marc Heath, the lawyer defending the city in the suit it shares with Leopold, makes clear that Williams' proposed strategy will not be adopted. "The notion that this suggestion would benefit the city or its taxpayers, particularly coming from the individuals who have increased the city in this expensive and time-consuming lawsuit, is disingenuous," Heath wrote in an email message. "If Williams and his clients are truly interested in helping the city and its taxpayers, they should discuss the lawsuit."

The defense argues that Leopold is entitled to immunity as a public officerholder who did not intentionally violate the provision in BT's state license requiring that borrowed funds be paid back to the city in 60 days.

BT Attorney Christopher Boker denies both federal and state criminal investigations into Burlington Telecom and Leopold's role in the mismanagement ended without charges being filed. Leopold "may have made poor management decisions," Boker adds, "but he didn't do anything illegal. He's smart enough to have corrected his act."

Baker views Williams' suggested solution as "underhanded and dishonest."

It's widely agreed that Burlington Telecom is being run more soundly today than it was under the dual leadership of Leopold and former manager Chris Burns, who led the two years ago. Bernier, the BT point man for Dorcas & Powell, has stepped the bleeding. Weinberger observes "It's created a much more efficient operation. There's also been a modest growth in subscribers."

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# Burlington's King Street Neighborhood Looks to Build Up – Without Gentrifying

by KATHryn F. Legg

**J**odie Whalen says Burlington's King Street neighborhood was "a little broken down" when she and her husband, Phil Merrick, opened their cafe and bakery, August First, in 2006. Today, the section is on the upswing, but with empty buildings and vacant lots, Whalen sees room for improvement.

"Burlington needs to build up," she says, "and this is a great neighborhood to do that."

Now the King Street neighborhood is poised for something of a housing boom – and renters of all incomes stand to benefit. The Burlington Housing Authority (BHA) is building 36 apartments on King between South Champlain and Ramsey, on the site of a concrete where a warehouse was demolished this summer.

Around the corner, on a vacant lot on South Champlain Street, Vermont developer Daniel Rhinley plans to build market-rate apartments. Developer Stuart Chase is building another 34 rental units – a mix of one- and two-bedroom apartments – at 187 St. Paul Street, between King and Maple.

Meanwhile, Champlain College is building apartment-style housing for up to 250 students at the site of the old Eagles Club on the corner of Maple and St. Paul.

The result of all this construction? "It's doing exactly what an urban neighborhood needs to do, which is serve all segments of the market," says Brian Piss, the assistant director for housing and neighborhood revitalization in Burlington's Community and Economic Development Office. "That's something just about for everyone."

Thirty years ago, the concern among King Street neighborhood residents was gentrification, and the answer was to build affordable housing. The city established a neighborhood revitalization area that stretched from Main Street, south to Haysward Street and from Battery Street east to South Wisconsin Street and used federal subsidies to entice developers to build low-income housing.

In 2010, two low-income apartment



King Street warehouse lot



King Street project

buildings went on the section block after their 20-year affordability agreements expired. Many people expected owner Pinnacle Properties to convert the Hobbs Mill and Wharf Lane to apartment housing, but the BHA struck a last-minute deal to keep the units affordable indefinitely.

BHA owns or manages between 700 and 800 rental units in the Greater Burlington area, but the King Street neighborhood is home to the greatest concentration of Section 8 projects in

the city, which provide taxpayer-funded rental assistance to keep monthly rents low.

In 2010, BHA purchased the Homeport warehouse at 36 King Street and a 1900s Federalist brick building next door. The red brick building will be converted to house two apartments. The warehouse was razed this summer to make way for a three-story, 14-unit apartment complex of primarily small efficiency units that will rent for between \$935 and \$1239, including heat

and hot water. Altogether, BHA is spending more than \$2 million on the project.

Burlington's rental market is among the tightest in the northeast, and affordable housing can be especially hard to come by. At present, the wait time for a Section 8 housing voucher is between seven and eight years, says BHA special projects manager Matthew Han-Elli. BHA also maintains separate waiting lists for individual properties that are pre-announced as Section 8 housing – and the King Street neighborhood, home





to more than 200 such housing units, has the highest concentration of Section 8 properties in the city.

BHA executive director Paul Detman says the proliferation of housing-authority projects in the neighborhood is more a matter of chance than design. "It happens to be that a couple of the big at-risk projects were located in this neighborhood," says Detman, adding that in a city consumed by landlords like the lake or Intervale, "where you locate things is often the result of opportunities."

The King Street neighborhoods' quick mix of industrial and residential has attracted private development too, including Anne Rothwell, a former co-owner of Club Metromore. She purchased the dilapidated house at 159 South Champlain Street in 2005. The following year, it was razed by fire and has sat boarded up since.

Rothwell has lobbied the city for a demolition permit so she can construct a duplex with a "main-floor warehouse"-inspired design. "It's a perfect location," she says — just steps to the lake, and within walking distance of grocery stores and downtown shops. She wants to live on the property because she likes the area's "funkiness" with its mix of businesses — from Handy's lunch counter to the shop, JDK-run coffee shop, Magliocco.

That the neighborhood appeals to the backside of the world as much as to BHA leaders will be its future,

according to real estate developer Sea McGowan. A longtime resident of the old North End, McGowan says that neighborhood and King Street share the same concerns about potential gentrification and the importance of socioeconomic diversity.

"To my thinking, anywhere where there's too much of one thing, that's not a good thing," says McGowan. "To me, it's all about mixing it up as best as we can."

In the King Street neighborhood, striking that balance? Vicky Smith is executive director of the King Street Center, a family and children's center located in the heart of the neighborhood. She says the center pays close attention to the pulse of the neighborhood: the local families talking about their own experiences and dreams, asking, "What's the nature of the neighborhood? Is it gentrifying? What will it look like in five or 10 years?"

In response, she says that the area is vibrant and healthy — "just how any neighborhood should be." But Smith says residents face challenges of poverty in the neighborhood, adding that "poverty does not keep pace" with new construction or neighborhood upgrades.

"These are entrenched challenges, entrenched problems. Sometimes it can feel like a very deep black hole within the walls of King Street as the building goes on around us." □

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## FACT CHECKER

BY PAUL HEINTZ

**CLAIM: "AS CITY TREASURER, WILTON TURNED RUTLAND'S \$5 MILLION DEFICIT INTO A \$3.8 MILLION SURPLUS."**

— Television commercial supporting Republican state treasurer candidate Wendy Wilson, paid for by the conservative super PAC Vermonters First.

**FACTS:** When Wilton and Rutland Mayor Christopher Louran took office in March 2007, the city was reeling from years of sloppy bookkeeping.

Due to an improper commingling of accounts, the city's general fund had been depleted to cover deficits in its water and sewer funds. The situation grew so dire that Rutland had to borrow \$5 million in 2006 to plug a hole in the general fund.

When Wilton took office, she implemented new accounting practices and began providing regular accounts reports to the board of aldermen, the mayor and the public. Over the next few years, Louran and the board—with input from Wilton—brought the budget under control by trimming expenses and raising property taxes and water and sewer rates.

In 2010, Wilton refinanced the remaining debt from the \$5 million loan, along with \$3 million in new expenses stemming from a 2004 roof collapse at Rutland's water-treatment facility. Water and sewer ratepayers—who include residents of several neighboring towns—are still paying all that \$6 million debt today.

According to Wilton, the \$3.8 million surplus mentioned in the Vermonters First advertisement—and used in her own campaign literature—refers to Rutland's fiscal year 2010 general-fund balance. That figure does not factor in the city's long-term debt, which totals \$15.13 million.

Rutland's general-fund balance has not increased dramatically during Wilton's tenure. According to revised figures from a 2006 audit, Rutland's general-fund balance was \$2.7 million three months after she took office. It has since grown to the current level of \$3.8 million.

**SCORE:** The ad raises two questions: Did Rutland in fact transform a \$5 million deficit into a \$3.8 million surplus? And does Wilton deserve credit for it?

On the second question, Wilton receives near universal acclaim from Louran and members of the board of aldermen for enabling them to take the necessary steps to stabilize Rutland's budget. But several aldermen argued that Rutland's turnaround was a team effort and that the super-PAC ad exploits the role Wilton played.

While the ad was developed independently, Rutland city treasurer stands by the accuracy of the claim.

On the second question, the figures cited in the Wilton ad are an apples-to-oranges comparison. The \$3 million figure refers to a loan the city took out before Wilton took office to recover from a predecessor's bad bookkeeping. The \$3.8 million refers to the general-fund surplus—the city's annual revenues minus expenses—but does not include long-term debt obligations.

The numbers used in the ad paint an incomplete picture of Rutland's overall financial picture, which is more nuanced. For that reason, we rate the claim "Debatable."



**F** Each week in Fact Checker, reporters and editors from *Benning's Dispatch* and *VTDigger* will evaluate the veracity of statements and analyze them on a five-point scale: True, Mostly True, Debatable, Mostly False and False.

**DISCLAIMER:** Each fact checker is based on the information available at the time of publication. For that reason, we rate the claim "Debatable."

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## Three Years Later

about BT as their telecom provider, Barrelogh reports. The number of customers has been growing slowly since BT went online in January 2006, but the total dropped from about 1400 in October 2009 to 1002 at the end of 2010 in response to the avalanche of bad news about the business.

The fall-off "was all about the negative publicity surrounding BT," Barrelogh says. "But the thing that amazes me is that we lost only 12 percent of our subscribers."

The number of large commercial customers has actually remained steady, he points out, suggesting that's because "they know BT won't be shut down." Every business leader "understand they wouldn't be left in the dark — that the [Vermont] public service board would never allow that to happen," Barrelogh says.

BT's revenues mirror the year-to-year loss of subscribers. The utility brought in \$22 million during fiscal 2011 and \$17 million in fiscal 2012, Barrelogh says. He attributes that

decline to the loss of subscribers during that period — as well as to some of BT's remaining customers' decision to "slide down to low expense video packages."

Barrelogh Telecom has nevertheless managed to keep more cash on hand — \$945,000 at the end of fiscal 2012, compared to \$622,000 at the end of the previous fiscal year. Cost cutting accounts for the gain, Barrelogh says. He notes that BT's payroll has been pared to 22 full-time employees, which is about 10 fewer than during the 2009 era and as low as the total can go, Barrelogh suggests, without impacting service, which he says is of high quality. The utility has also become "more aggressive" in its contract negotiations with vendors, the general manager adds.

Also involved in the issue of BT's inability to complete the build-out of its network, which at present reaches about 85 percent of Burlington homes. The state required 100 percent coverage as a condition for BT's licensing. Barrelogh says he hopes the Public Service Board "will agree to provide some relief" from that

regulation as part of a deal with a new investor. Permission to build outside of Burlington — before the city build-out is complete — would allow BT to grow.

While Burlington Telecom is able to operate effectively in the short term, its extremely small subscriber base may prevent it from remembering the resources it needs to maintain and upgrade its services. "BT needs a partner to do that — hopefully a local commercial partner," Barrelogh comments. Some telecom experts have long argued that BT cannot be a viable enterprise unless it expands beyond Burlington. The utility's fiber-optic network is said to have the capacity to serve an estimated 100,000 subscribers — 35 times its

current number of customers — but BT would need state approval to solicit business outside of Burlington's borders.

These days, the utility is relying almost entirely on social media and word-of-mouth marketing to advertise services because it can't finance a major marketing push. Even if it could, Barrelogh says, launching such a campaign last year would probably have been a big mistake because "people would have been angry with us for spending that kind of money."

Under its current constraints, BT can't begin to compete with Comcast's marketing muscle, Barrelogh concedes. "But we can arguably win the game by becoming more embedded in the local community," he suggests.

Is there a bright spot in any of this? Yes, the mayor maintains. He notes that the city has managed to assemble a roughly \$4 million cash reserve. And Shomon observes that its due mostly to the efforts of the much-maligned Kim and Leopold. Looked at from that perspective, the debt BT owes the city can be seen as amounting to only \$9 million, not almost \$27 million, Webber says.

But there's always a Catch 22 when it comes to BT. Council president Shomon points out that the \$4 million set-aside isn't actually pledged to BT's debt due to the state prohibition against spending any more city money on Burlington Telecom. ☐



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# Poetry With Your Chard? A Farmers Market Encounter

BY KEENAN WALSH

I've considered myself a poet for a while now, but not the kind who writes so many poems. I'm the kind of poet who mostly thinks about writing poems, who has the occasional fleeting poetic thought, but almost never commits it to the page for fear that it might turn out less spectacular than I'd imagined. I'm holding off on my masterpiece until I gain more "life experience." A lot of people think that's lazy, but Judge Kane disagrees and that the work of a poet never ends, that even one doesn't stop at the end of the work. So really, when you think about it, it's a pretty stressful profession. I've chosen for myself.

When I got lost from my friends for not writing, I go to great pains to defend my "poet" title. I guess that comes with the territory. But it's something Burlington poet **REN ALESKIRE** never has to worry about. He's an affable, the kind of poet who's always writing, who never stops. If there is a 541-line endeavor — in Borges' view — his is an all-consuming one.

Perhaps you've seen Aleskire. This summer at the Burlington Farmers Market, he and his poetic colleagues have been typing up personalized verse on an old manual typewriter. As people walk along the edge of City Hall Park, fresh produce in hand, Aleskire watches from behind his machine. "Do you want a poem?" he asks the passerby.

They stop and read, moved by the novelty of the gesture. How can you say no? Aleskire asks them for a topic — any topic — and tells them to come back in 10 minutes. When they do, their poems are waiting. You see read it and pay him what you think it's worth — from one dollar to a dollar.

It's a pretty nice setup — and occasionally brings people to tears, says Aleskire — but it turns out also to be a smart business move. Sen. Aleskire is also editor of **HOUSEHOLD PRESS**, which he founded in 2007 to "fill the void" in Burlington, he says, at the time, in his view, the town had no literary magazine that sought to bridge the gap between the "poetic and the noisy crowd." Household Press publishes the *Salon*, which attempts just that.

Aleskire prints the magazine himself — on handmade paper, no less — which

**IT'S A PRETTY ROMANTIC SETUP — AND OCCASIONALLY BRINGS PEOPLE TO TEARS, SAYS ALESKIRE — BUT IT TURNS OUT ALSO TO BE A SMART BUSINESS MOVE.**

## Puppy

*My thinking was once  
now it all revolves  
the moment of terrible light  
followed by eternal night.  
I had heard them whispering  
in the park for days,  
frowning at the glowing  
arcade  
they came to love  
more than me. Believe it  
or not, I don't take them.  
I never needed them  
in the first place.  
Now I am growing up.  
I am growing  
into a wolf.*

REN ALESKIRE

takes a lot of time but also saves a lot of money. Last year Household received a generous grant from the **VERMONT ARTS COUNCIL**, but lately the mostly volunteer-based press has been supporting itself on magazine and book sales alone, Aleskire says. He notes that the farmers-market project has revolutionized the way he writes, making him less of a "noisy poet" and more of an on-the-spot bard.

But it's also no accident that he has the magazine displayed for customers as he cracks out their personalized poems.

Anyway, I had heard of this Sen. Aleskire guy. Along a great-writer-in-the-making myself — and then Aleskire competitive — I decided to go check him out. On Saturday morning, I walked up in City Hall Park and respectfully approached the poet's table. I already knew who he was, but he didn't know that.

"Do you want a poem?" he asked me. "Oh, I need inspiration." "Well, um...?" Then guy doesn't know what he's in for, I thought, eyes to stamp him and prove to myself that nobody could write a real poem that fast.

"OK, just give me a topic." Aleskire said as he finished his last poem and headed it to a blushing young girl.

"Well, let's see." I thought. "How about... falling in love with... or, no... maybe, it covers it in the... or, how about... an inspiring nuclear holocaust as seen through the eyes of a puppy?"

Back to my chapter, Aleskire didn't bat an eye. He told me to evade around the market and come back. When I did (obviously at a faster-than-normal pace), my poem was waiting.

Now, look, being a poet myself, I've read a lot of "poet." You know the type — the books, the workshops. Well, I read my poem twice through right then and there, and I'm here to tell you, ladies and gentlemen, this man is a poet, indeed.

My walk home was interrupted. On the way back, my assistant to fix around the poem in the park had faded, and I now felt like were that I was the best poet in town. But on the other hand — or, more accurately, on the other hand — I had this beautiful poem, written (in the heat of a continuous inspiration) just for me. ☺

**I** Ren Aleskire and fellow Household Pressers Marka and Melissa Haney have a poem appear at the Burlington Farmers Market on Saturdays, from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. through October 21 (they'll also be at the Burlington Food Festival and workshops on Saturday September 22, and Sunday September 23 at Morris Street Landing Performing Arts Center). Aleskire will also read on Sunday September 25 at 6:30 at the John Dewey Lounge, 300 Hill Building, University of Vermont, as part of the WRVU Reader Book Launch (see p. 48). householdpress.org/burlingtonpoetsthatcan, householdpresscenter



Ren Aleskire

PHOTO BY KEENAN WALSH

# the WRUV reader

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## MORE BOOK NEWS

**WRUV** the student-run radio station at the University of Vermont is known for its diverse, independent music programming. This week, it's branching out — to the written word. Thanks thanks to the efforts of DJ "Twisted" teacher and fiction writer **DAVE CRANE**. And coincidentally the publication is just in time for this weekend's **SAM MARRAS BOOK FESTIVAL** (see preview page 36). On Thursday, September 20, The WRUV Reader debuts with a reception on campus and readings of stories and poems in the book by UVM profs **PHILIP RABUTH**, **WILLIAM JACKSON** and **ANTHONY BONA**, as well as students' recent grads and other Burlington poets.

### WRUV READER LAUNCH

WRUV Reader: A Vermont Writers' Anthology. UVM Student Media/Creole Space Independent Publishing Platform, 242 pages, \$10 b&w \$25 color. Reception Thursday September 20, at 6:30 p.m., followed by reading at 7 p.m., at John Dewey Lounge, Old Mill Building, UVM Burlington. Info, writers@wruv.org, www.writers.net

Punklett Lake Press, an online publisher that offers "eBOOKS OF LIFE WRITING," is putting American Cassandra on the virtual book stand. Written by Burlington author **PETER KURTH**, it's the biography of the country's arguably most influential female journalist, Dorothy Thompson (1892-1961) who wrote presciently about the rise of the Nazis and an Israel and the Middle East, not to mention the costs of technology and corporate intrusions, and the increasing militarization of the U.S. Incidentally, Thompson lived in Barre and VT, for a time with her second husband, Nobel Prize-winning novelist Sinclair Lewis. Welcome back, Dorothy.

### E-BOOK RELEASE

American Cassandra: The Life of Dorothy Thompson by Peter Kurth, Punklett Lake Press, \$9.99 on Kindle or Nook, punkletlakepress.com

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## ART



## The Art Hop Carries on With Juried Shows Past and Present

BY KELVIN J. HIGLEY

**F**ew art shows are as ubiquitous as the one that's been staged each of the past 20 September in Burlington's South End. For a \$35 Art Hop entry fee, anyone can show pretty much anything to a potential 30,090 viewers. The one exception: that democratic straggler in the Juried Show, where judgments are made about the comparative quality of works submitted.

THE SOUTH END ARTS AND BUSINESS ASSOCIATION, which organizes the Hop, exhibits an outside juror who chooses first-, second- and third-place winners among works exhibited at an indoor venue, as well as sculptures installed outdoors at various South End sites. The

top three receive cash prizes of \$500, \$325 and \$100, respectively, along with, presumably, heightened attention from viewers, media and perhaps collectors.

Does this privileging of the few over the many violate the democratic spirit of the Art Hop? Is a juried show inevitably an exercise in elitism? Can such a selection process be wholly objective?

No, no and no, replies MARK WADSWORTH, president of SEABA and Vermont's most vocal advocate of contemporary art.

"I can't think of any discipline or art form that doesn't have some kind of judging process," Wadsworth says. "The juried show has been a tradition since at least the Renaissance. It's a way of recognizing achievement — which sort

of the same as saying, 'This is good art and that's bad art.'"

Artists themselves decide whether to enter a work for juried consideration. In keeping with the Art Hop's inclusiveness, anyone can at least nominate himself for an award. This year, 246 pieces were submitted, and juror Todd Bartel awarded about \$6 of them worthy of presentation at the SEABA Center on Pine Street. From that selection, Bartel chose a top three.

Wadsworth acknowledges that this winnowing process reflects personal taste. "Each juror brings their own biases, subjectivity and experiences," he says.

Bartel agrees. "Of course it's a subjective process," he says. "I don't consider

myself infallible, but I do hope my choices are compelling to more people than myself."

Like previous juries, Bartel comes with the credentials to make informed judgments. He's been teaching art courses since 1986 at universities including Harvard, Brown and Carnegie Mellon. In addition, "I've earned more shows than I can count on both hands," he says. He's practicing Massachusetts-based college artist, as well, who has shown his work at venues in New England, New York and California. His work's most recent Vermont appearance was in a group show called "Hey Joe: An Honoree to Joseph Cornell," at Ascher's art gallery, which this past summer

in determining what would be at the top of the Hop, Bartel says, "I kept coming back to the things that haunted me most. There was something elemental about them." It might have been the artist's conviction that captured his attention, or "the idea behind the work." In some cases it was the juxtaposition of images or materials, Bartel explains.

The names of artists are not revealed to jurors who assess works submitted for the show. Judgments are thus based solely on the perceived success of a work, not on the reputation — or obscurity — of its maker.

Bartel awarded first prize to clay artist JOHN BAZZELLE for "Old Betty," a miniature tricycle made of stoneware, metal, rubber and wood. "What amazed me about that piece was its components," Bartel says. "I mean, ceramics have nothing to do with bicycles."

His second choice was "Old Child on Elmwood Mountain," by KAREN THORNTON. Viewers may initially mistake the oddly angled image of a mounted tree for a photograph — it's that hyperrealistic. But Thornton's medium is actually ceramic, a milk-based paint that the artist

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Third prize went to **PAUL BORG NOVI** for "Galeas" (he also used a less-common material — mosaic (chested and pigmented bamboo) — in assembling a collage-like work in which birds, airplanes and bombs are superimposed over a map of Galeas, Illinois, in the belly of a target. "Think what went into making that," Bartel mused.

The juror got permission from Art Hoppers to designate three pieces in the READA gallery as "honorable mentions." These additional choices give exposure to Bartel's observation that "curating often means making aesthetic choices with fine points."

The first-place outdoor-sculpture winner was **JAMES TEACHER**'s "Pacote Dec" in which a long, thin branch reaches upward from a wooden walkway shape installed in front of **LAKE CHARLEVOIX OVERLOOKS** on Pine Street, the piece establishes Teacher as the first person ever to win top honors at two Art Hoppers. **ETAN BORG BUTTS** was awarded second prize for "Seed," which stands outside **AL PHOTO** on Jean Lane and features actual grass growing within a spherical borax form. Third place went to "Dance," a tall, white, curving formation topped with a white sphere created by **MICHAEL J. BERAL**. This piece, on Pine near the Miller Building, suggests a real balance on a ball on its base.

True to the all-in approach of the Art Hop, Bartel's taste encompasses a range of genres and criteria. He writes in the introductory text that selections were "blind to media" — meaning that the Juried Show aimed to include art made by any means. "I believe there is beauty to be found in the mud as well as the exquisitely crafted," Bartel adds in that opening statement.

Crowdsourcing offers another way of judging artistic achievement. At this year's Art Hop, the Peoples Choice award went to **HENRI KAMPEL**'s "Unleashed Pain" in the "overwhelming" (some among the nearly 400 voters who took part in the balloting) says READA's executive director, **ADAM BRONKE** — even though the voters could see that Kampe's beautifully open suggestion of a bird shattered in midair was not among the juror's top preferences.

Art Hoppers can debate the merits of jurors' past choices when they view a retrospective at KL Photo. The 27 works on display amount to an "Art Hop's Greatest Hits" collection, assembled by Walkow to mark the event's 20th anniversary. About half of the artists who have won prizes are represented in this exhibit — in most cases, by the actual works that inspired jurors. Some other confounding: the other pieces hanging at KL Photo are not prize winners, but subsequent pieces made by winning artists over those two decades.

The standouts here include another piece by Bartels — "Queen Elizabeth," a tricky, machine-like assemblage that does indeed resemble the British monarch, **FRANK GARDNER**'s "Red Deer," a sparse gouache painting of a ghostly animal, and **JOHN GREGAL**'s likewise but disturbing "Capital Security" in which multiple images of a black-and-white photo of the artist — made but carrying a tragically situated machine gun — are scattered around the grounds of the Statehouse in Montpelier.

The Art Hop's selections and the array of subject choices by past jurors are mentioned in this retrospective by the meticulous craftsmanship of **MARILYN W** ("Virgin Mary"), the sleek photographs of "Night City" by **JULIE ALAMAND** and the stone wood sculpture "Wonder" by **ROBERT BUTTS** (Hirz's stained-wood piece "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised" is one of the most professionally worked pieces in this year's Juried Show).

The South End Art Hop has grown huge — 400-plus artists participated this year in more than 100 locations — and has always been riotously diverse in its offerings. No single description can encompass an event that's as much a party as it is an exhibit. And as for overall opinion of the Hop, Bartel boasts this easily: "It's unlike a lot of events of this kind, because it doesn't seem to care about precious circles. Many art shows make you feel like you've entered a club. The Art Hop definitely doesn't feel like that." ☺

## THE JURIED SHOW HAS BEEN A TRADITION SINCE AT LEAST THE RENAISSANCE.

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# BROTHERS



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Ⓢ "Broth Er S" is a collection of 10 stories. It is the first part of an ongoing series by mEli SSA MENDES. For more information visit [www.mEliSSA.com](http://www.mEliSSA.com). All characters and places are fictional. For more of her work visit [www.mEliSSA.com](http://www.mEliSSA.com).





Dear Cecil,  
I am five and have been wondering about this for almost half my life now. How many ice cubes would it take to put out the sun? My mom found your website and thought you must know the answer, since you know everything.

Re: Mordue

**Y**ou're one articulate 5-year-old, Ben, and plainly your mom is also no dummy. Your question has obliged us to re-think the basics, always a useful exercise. Plus you've given us yet another opportunity to brainstorm cosmic extinction, and what former 3-year-old could fail to get a kick out of that?

Let's clear up some misconceptions. First, and you'll excuse me if this seems petty, ice cubes have never been the freighting methodology of choice.

Second and more important, technically the sun isn't on fire. What you've got up there is a nuclear furnace. Hydrogen atoms in a huge cloud of gas and dust, the sun eventually was condensed by gravity into a ball, its temperature rising steadily to the present.

After the summer we just had, you must think you know



but Ben doesn't. When a pro-millisecond ball gets up to about 10 million degrees Celsius, nuclear fusion spontaneously begins. That's hot. During fusion, hydrogen atoms combine under enormous pressure and temperature to make helium and release energy in the form of heat, light, high-energy radiation, neutrinos — things with the neutrinos, the neutrinos of the universe — and other non-melting particles.

Long story short, there's no fire in the usual sense to put, if you were someone to throw an

ice cube into the sun, the effort would be the opposite of what you're hoping. First, the ice would quickly melt and turn to steam. After heating to more than 5000 degrees Celsius, the steam would turn into plasma,

excusing the hydrogen and oxygen atoms would fly apart and shed their electrons. The hydrogen would serve as raw fuel for the nuclear reactions, and given the right conditions, so would the oxygen. In other words, you'd just make things worse.

Another nontrivial problem is how you'd get the ice to the sun without having it melt. Comets, which are largely composed of ice, plunge toward

once in a while, but from what I can see they rarely arrive intact. Last summer, for example, comet C/2001 N1, fairly hefty at 12 million pounds, got within about 60,000 miles of the solar surface and vaporized completely.

That's not to say you couldn't theoretically douse the sun with ice cubes. Suppose you could teleport a monumental quantity of ice into the heart of the sun. The sun's core provides almost all of the nuclear fusion that powers it, and currently bubbles along at about 15.7 million degrees Celsius. Bringing that temperature down below 10 million degrees might halt fusion, if only briefly. Gravity pulling everything together to what led to all that heat is the first place, and that's not going away. So after the initial temperature drop and a period of reorganization, fusion would start up again — this time with even more hydrogen to burn.

But we'll assume that for now. How much ice would you need? It's tricky, since the laws of Newtonian physics don't apply in the heart of a star, and some stellar properties are only conjectured. Nevertheless, Miling certain bold assumptions, my assistant Joe determined that duffing the sun core to below 10 million degrees would require an ice cube 362,000 miles on a side. If you were planning on using standard-size cubes from your kitchen freezer, you'd need about 45 million of them.

There's 45 followed by 30 zeroes. Never mind how long it would take to make that many ice cubes, Ben — it'd take you a while just to write it out.

Approximately a lot of ice, more than twice the volume of the sun's core. Its size alone might be enough to tear the sun apart — but again, only temporarily. Gravity would eventually consolidate the ice fragments, the temperature would rise, and the thing would regrettably like one of those truck birthday candles.

OK, so how might we permanently extinguish the sun? A nearby black hole could tear the sun apart and swallow it, as was witnessed recently by astronomers in a cryogenic, so powerful it was detected 27 billion light-years away. It's also possible that colliding with enough non-fusible material, such as a mass of metallic iron asteroids, could dissipate the nuclear fire (and almost certainly lead to formation of a black hole, a cool concept all by itself).

One last thing. This cosmic ice cube painted above would have one-third the mass of the sun. Left floating in space and given enough time to compact itself, it would eventually heat to the point of fusion and become its own little sun. A mere 0.06 solar mass is required for this purpose.

So, Ben, when you're packing snowballs this winter? Make sure you don't make them too big.

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## God and Elvis

**L**ike the swallows returning to Capistrano, the students have come back to Burlington. While lacking the poetic cachet of migrant birds, the collegians once again make up for it in spending money. Once, their arrival also infused the city with a youthful vitality befitting with creative and unbridled possibility. That's all wonderful, but no—a typical bustling local exhibit—I'll take the cash, thank you very much.

It was their first weekend back, and our fine-furbished friends were flocking downtown on Saturday night. The streets pulsated with excitement, movement and energy. Late nights, especially on weekends, Burlington people use as playground for the young. It's truly a different world, and, given my age, one of which I would know next to nothing if it weren't for my job. Driving a taxi, I've been an observer of this ecosystem for some 30 years, 13 in one cowdled in the jungle with the apes. All I've managed is the 9th planet.

Ahead the bottle. I picked up a man rather too long in the tooth for collegiate status. His dress was ostentatious and precise—"just so" come to mind, more afternoon-meetings-at-the-office than his-baggy-in-the-town. His dark eyes gleamed with intelligence, but short, black hair was tidily styled and as impossibly set as his clothes.

"The Wooden Mill, my friend," he said, getting into the downtown seat. His second ordered my drink. It wasn't a regional American variation but a foreign infusion I couldn't name place.

As we turned toward Watkinson, he said, "My name is Ahmet. What is yours?"

I told him Jeramian, and he said, "What a beautiful night, isn't it? It makes you glad to be alive?"

This conversation was unusual for I in the morning. It wasn't so much his bubbly friendliness—plenty of late-night riders are gregarious and charming; but the juxtaposition of home-shelter abodes triggers such edibility. This guy, by contrast, didn't appear associated in the least.

"Arap," I suspended. "It's been a great day and a great night—not too hot, not too cold, sunny and warm, slight breeze just right." When it comes to the weather, I like to cover all the bases. "They where you are from, man? Your accent is escaping me. Eastern Europe, maybe?"

"No, good guess," he replied with a chuckle. "I come here from Turkey."

"Turkey? Very cool. What a great country. Kind of a hotbed of progress and modernity in that part of the world, wouldn't you say?"

## HIS ACCENT TICKLED MY EARS. IT WASN'T A REGIONAL AMERICAN VARIATION BUT A FOREIGN INFLECTION I COULDN'T QUITE PLACE.

"You knew something?" he asked rhetorically, apparently passing on my intention to talk Turkey back. Turkey "I'm only 22, but my father had waffles all kind at around 20, so I believe I have only another 35 years left. That's sad to think about on such a beautiful day. I mean, the thought of leaving this world."

"Well," I said, struck by the guy's sincerity. "If you believe in the continuity of the soul, maybe there's a better place we could go. Or maybe we come back to this world at some point."

"No, that's not for me," he said, waving away the notion with a flutter of his hand.

"I'm an atheist. I'm certain that this world is all there is."

"Really?" I said, genuinely surprised. "That's funny—I would have taken you for a spiritual guy. Anyway you know some people distinguish between themselves and things and religious humanity on the one hand, and spirituality on the other. Do you know what I'm talking about, right? A person's inner personal experience of God, the universal spirit, the great beyond—however you want to call it?"

"No, I'm all the same to me. I'm talking about so-called spirituality, too. It's all just fancy thinking. Why do we even need it? Science explains everything, and what it doesn't, it eventually will."

"Interesting," I said, "but I see it like this. If I were to construct a list of the things I hold most important, most meaningful in

my life—friendship, family, music, beauty, poetry, kindness, love, for crying out loud—some of these aspects of human existence can be understood by science. To say nothing about meditation or prayer. Can science capture the profundity of those practices?"

Ahmet threw into a big smile. "Absolutely not, my friend!" he replied with gusto. It was clear the man refused just this kind of polemic. "Science can explain all of those experiences and quite intimately and regarding people's so-called 'inner experience' what if someone said you're their 'superior'—their deepest belief, and you—

you say to that? After all, it is the person's quite unique 'experience'."

We were sitting across the Wooden Mill circle at this point, the perfect locale for metaphysical debate. As we came upon the Wooden Mill apartments, I interrupted the conversation at hand to ask, "Optimist or pessimist-in-transit, Ahmet?"

"Pessimist—optimist will be fine." I pointed to the curb and placed the vehicle in park. Turning to face my customer, I said, "If someone is telling me they know that life is still alive, I'd gladly sell them they're deluded because there is obvious, objective evidence that the King has left the building. But that says nothing about the deeper things we were talking about."

"Well, let's go through them," Ahmet suggested. "One by one, let's discuss."

Chuckling, I said, "Ahmet, I'd love to. But right now, I gotta head back downtown and make some more money."

As he paid the fare, a look of concern came over his face. He said, "Brother, I'm sorry if I offended you in any way."

"You didn't offend me at all. In the least. I thought you were a very respectful discussion."

"Well, then, next time we will have to continue this."

I said, "I'm looking forward to it."

I sped back to Burlington, thinking, *Maybe the next guy also will want to debate the existence of God. Nah. Odds are he'll probably want to talk about chicks. Or football. Definitely the weather.* ☺

Hackie is a local writing column that can also be read on [www.burlingtonmag.com](http://www.burlingtonmag.com).

To reach Jeramian Pontac, call 1-800-368-2828 or [hackie@burlingtonmag.com](mailto:hackie@burlingtonmag.com).

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# CRUNCH TIME

## Who will be Vermont's next auditor? Scrutinizing the scrutinizers

BY KEN PICARD

**D**oug Hoffer was in downtown St. Albans on a recent Tuesday night for the grand opening of the Franklin County Democratic Party headquarters. Dressed sharply in a dark suit and gold tie, he exuded a quiet confidence as he stepped to the microphone to address the 40 or so party faithful munching on deviled eggs and pepperoni sliders.

Hoffer's three-minute devilspeak was a matter-of-fact explanation of why he's running — for the second time — for state auditor.

"I'm a numbers guy. That's what I do," Hoffer said with professional gravitas. "It's the only job in state government I'm interested in. The bottom line is, I have a talent for identifying and asking tough questions. My work has been evidence-based, which is the core of the auditor's work."

When voters go to the polls on November 6, after picking candidates for president, governor, U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, they will face a choice for state auditor — arguably the most important statewide office in most Vermonters never think about. As state governments off and on through the nation is charged with preventing waste, fraud and abuse, assessing the state's fiscal health, and determining whether taxpayers are getting the biggest bang for their buck.

Historically, the auditor wasn't much of a force in Montpelier. Then, in 2003, a Harvard-educated lawyer named Ed Flanagan made the previously marginal office into a platform for scrutinizing executive-branch policies. Flanagan frequently issued scathing reports that embarrassed the administration of then governor Howard Dean — a fellow Democrat — and earned Flanagan the nickname "belling." In more recent years, the office has exposed serious problems with the state's sex-offender registry as well as fraudulent billing by providers who serve the community of Hoffer or worked as a contractor for eight years in the office, or he now seeks

for a better candidate — running as both the Democratic and Progressive ballots — who seems genetically predisposed to digging day-in-and-out from dirt and fluff into sober policy recommendations.

His weaknesses? He's never held elected office — which some describe as a virtue for an auditor — and his sole management experience was working as the head of a firm of more than 30 years ago at the legendary Allen's Restaurant.

In stark contrast, his opponent is Republican candidate Vance Hazzan, a 20-year state senator and Essex County state's attorney who seems to know

as his steering position to pressing risks and knowing babies. This time around, though, the candidate appears to be trying much harder at retail politics outside of Chittenden County. Hoffer has attended the opening of virtually every Democratic headquarters in the state and has a calendar that includes at least 40 scheduled events between March and October.

Hoffer is an attorney by training but has never practiced law. A self-employed policy analyst who works largely out of his Burlington condo, he came to the Queen City in 1985 to

confront what he saw as a "policy vacuum" — but agrees that the auditor's job requires a solid working knowledge of state government beyond "scratching the numbers."

For his part, Hoffer admits he has neither a track record nor love for self-promotion in street-level politicking. Yet, when a Facebook campaign helped him net up a Facebook campaign page, Hoffer was elated that the social networking site wouldn't let him choose another suitable tagline than "politician."

Hoffer or doesn't sound like one. He speaks eloquently, in a business voice, without resorting to the typical tools of the trade: well-practiced talking points, emotional appeals or humble-brags anecdotes. Those who don't know Hoffer might mistake his calm demeanor for conceit, his low-key demeanor for lack of passion. An accomplished master puffer, he comes across as weary and fuzzy in a rare form.

Over the years, lawmakers and journalists alike have felt Hoffer's worth, especially when they felt the facts. In blasting blog comments and scolding emails, the self-described "Data Man" always endures to set the record straight. "He could prove to be a real headache to [Gov. Peter] Shumlin," says University of Vermont political science professor Garrison Nelson.

But many people who have worked with Hoffer or praise his blunt, no-nonsense style. They agree that his sharp mind, observant attention to detail and unswervingness to support his findings are the very qualities that would make him an excellent state auditor.

But if not, Hoffer or needs to get elected. To do so, Hoffer will have to beat out the most tireless lawmakers in Vermont. Hazzan, a Montpelier native who resides in Newport, is arguably Vermont's most "anti-establishment" — one of only two GOP lawmakers to serve a committee in the Democrat-dominated Senate.

Described by friends and colleagues as energetic, pragmatic and charismatic, Hazzan is the consummate fifth-hour deal maker who rarely fails to bring home the

**A reluctant campaigner, Doug Hoffer was irked that the social networking site wouldn't let him choose another suitable tagline than "politician."**

everything about — and everyone in — state government. First elected during Ronald Reagan's first term, Hazzan is the consummate Montpelier insider and a master of making deals across party lines.

Hazzan has the endorsement of outgoing Auditor Tami Johnson, a Democrat-turned-Republican who is retiring after three terms. Hoffer or, 61, ran against Johnson two years ago. In 2008, the incumbent auditor got booed for drunk driving, and a video of his arrest was released to the press during the 2010 campaign — the result of a lawsuit brought forth by Burlington attorney and Hoffer or supporter John Proulx.

But Johnson's vote didn't hand Proulx's favorite a win. Hoffer or lost the general election by six percentage points, a defeat some observers blamed

work for then-mayor Bernie Sanders in the city's Community and Economic Development Office.

He left the city's employ in 1993 and found a niche in the private sector, generating progressive-minded policy analysis for nonprofit groups. Beginning in 1997, Hoffer or authored the Peace & Justice Center's "Vermont Job Gap Study," a series of 10 reports on the impacts of wage inequalities, economic development programs and Vermont's dependence on imports. He's done similar analyses for legislative committees, including Hazzan's.

"I've enjoyed working with Doug," says Hazzan, who seems to avoid mentioning his opponent by name unless directly asked about him. Indeed, Hazzan admits he respects Hoffer or's work — "I invited him to join committee when other

been for his Northeast Kingdom constituents. After more than three decades in the Senate, he's rightfully earned the nickname "King of the Kingdom."

So far, Blumenthal has generated the backing of at least seven Democratic colleagues in the Senate, including Dick Sears, Hinkle Miller, Bill Curran, Bob Sturtevant, Dick Maza, Jeanette White and Peter Calabrese, the last of whom, Blumenthal makes sure to mention, "sent me a thousand bucks."

Blumenthal also counts as supporters former Democratic state auditor Les Ruddy and former Republican independent representative Daryl Hildreth, whose liberal-minded district couldn't be more politically different from Blumenthal's.

"All politicians like to think they're great and get a lot done. But when I was up there, Vince was one of the few people who really got things done," says Hildreth, who served as vice chair of the House

Institutions Committee when Blumenthal chaired Senate Institutions. "He always surprised me with his independence."

A self-described populist Republican in the mold of former Vermont governor and U.S. senator George Aiken, Blumenthal also secured nearly every known endorsement. Among them, Vermont's Teachers, the Vermont-National Education Association, the Professional Fire Fighters of Vermont, the Vermont Troopers Association, the Vermont Whittier's Association and the Vermont State Employees Association, the Vermont State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, is the only union that has so far sided with Blumenthal.

Asked why the Vermontans supported Blumenthal, the senator's Rep. Kathleen says it's because of all he's done for "working Vermonters, not just the labor union." Kathleen couldn't offer an opinion on Hoffman, noting, "I never heard from him."

Another longtime Democratic blow activist, who asked not to be identified, offered a different explanation for backing Blumenthal: "Vince scares people," he said. "They don't know what he's going to do if you cross him."

"King of the Kingdom"  
Vt. "Data Man"

Blumenthal may be from the Northeast Kingdom, but he was right at home last Friday at the Vermont Grover Association trade show in Essex Junction, where dozens of local food and alcohol retailers, distributors and suppliers were hawkling their wares and proving it all. Even before he got inside the expo center, Blumenthal had already handed out dozens campaign cards and recognized several old acquaintances.

Blumenthal had pants taken with a "Get MTHF" stick-on message at the food booth — "Anything to help the farmers," he remarked — grabbed a free hot dog at the Mitten County Classics booth, then made his way over to the Leonard's table, which was offering free samples of its pizza sauce.

"See that girl over there?" he whispered, gesturing to Leonard's co-owner Sara Fynn. "She was a legislative page back in 1980 or '87."

Clearly Blumenthal is a considerable foodie for Blumenthal, and not just because of all the free food and alcohol. At chair of the powerful Senate Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs Committee, Blumenthal oversees the Vermont Department of Labor, the Department of Liquor Control and the Department of Commerce. In short, virtually every businessperson in the state had been affected by his work.

During the action, Blumenthal talked about his vision for the state's job.

"Anything goes just about the numbers," Blumenthal said. "As an auditor, I think I can do a great job of auditing state government. But more efficiently, creatively. First money is spent where it's supposed to be,

and making recommendations to the legislature that will make it much more productive."

But Blumenthal, who was first elected to the Senate at age 27 — he turned 59 this week — would also like to transition from being the paid hand, backslapping politician to a state official who cannot hand out perks or do favors for political supporters. Is there a risk of having a career politician in the auditor's office?

"There's no danger to having too many friends in high places," says George Thibault, who spent eight years working under Democratic and Republican auditors. "You might fail to hold them accountable, or water down your findings, if you opt, or it is weakening the program of a friend."

Blumenthal counters that such an assessment assumes the auditor has an "adversarial relationship" with the people he audits, he says. "By and large, it's not adversarial. You need to cultivate relationships with that agency and department heads, and talk-and-it-is employees, are willing to share with you their experiences and observations to make things work better."

As auditor, Blumenthal says he would also "focus on transparency," with a thorough assessment of the audits done in the last decade by his predecessors to see what, if anything, resulted from their recommendations. Blumenthal insists he has no aspirations for higher office — "I've been in the Senate for 32 years," he says. "After that long, it's time to get out or do something different."

Earlier this year, Blumenthal published a list of the idea of running for attorney general had backed off after political strategy firm backing Democratic incumbent Ted Iversen in a hypothetical matchup. So he joined to the statewide state job — the only open seat in the statewide state job this year.

Blumenthal had to know that running for either position — top-popular chief watchdog — would bring up his own history of legal transgressions. The Vermont Bar Association's Professional Conduct Board has reprimanded Blumenthal five times and twice suspended his law license.

While working as an Orleans County deputy state's attorney in 1983, Blumenthal got a speeding ticket, then asked his employer to submit a false statement saying he was en route to an emergency call when he wasn't. Less than a year later, he was reprimanded again for allowing a cop to interview a suspect without a lawyer present.

The most serious sanction came in 1986, when the Judicial Conduct Board suspended him for 18 months for filing



## Crunch Time by Joe Zeff

three complaints against a judge and an attorney "with nocken disregard of obvious facts and basic legal principles." The board said it would not reinstate Illuzzi because said it had "clear and convincing evidence" that his assumption of governance law "would neither be detrimental to the integrity and standing of the bar or the administration of justice, nor subversive of the public interest."

In a 1999 Boston Globe profile, writer Jan Manganis dubbed him "The Casual King of the North."

Illuzzi doesn't make excuses, but explains all that happened a long time ago.

"I've learned from my mistakes," he says. "In large part, those were mistakes I made due to inexperience and immaturity. If you talk to the attorneys with which I work, I expect they would tell you that I'm firm and fair."

Illuzzi has never claimed to be a charmer, says former Vermont State political columnist and Northeast Kingdom native Shay Tatten, who worked in the nation's office under Randy Illuzzi in his separation for "pulling fast ones" and inserting language into bills at the last

minute, Tatten adds. "But that's how he plays the game. He does what he has to for his district."

Illuzzi goes beyond that, according to former auditor Randy, who served with Illuzzi in the state Senate and accompanied him to a recent taping of the news program "You Can Quote Me." Recalling more like campaign manager than class fiend, she notes Illuzzi's work over the years for "the little guy" — pension trustees, unions, the homeless and the mentally ill.

"Voice is just an ideology," Randy agrees. "It's not going to take the political viewpoint. He's not out there trying to prove he's right. He's taking the side of the taxpayer." She talks up his efforts in 2002 to buy back the hydroelectric dams along the Connecticut River and that year to rescue \$21 million for Vermont racquetball from a wobbly merger — both of which were unsuccessful.

What does Randy, who had her own official breach in office, say about Illuzzi's less than spotless reputation?

"From what I've seen, he's taken stands that as a lot of people have taken that have benefited many, many people," she says. "That would be my definition of ethical."

**First elected during Ronald Reagan's first term, Vince Illuzzi is the consummate Montpelier insider and a master deal maker.**

On "You Can Quote Me," Illuzzi suggested that if elected senator, he'd keep his part-time gig as Essex County state's attorney. (Illuzzi is not seeking re-election for his Senate seat.) Later, when asked how long he planned to double dip on the taxpayer's dime, Illuzzi modified his earlier remark, saying he'd definitely give up the prosecutor post but only after a suitable "transition period."

**T**he Hoofft camp doesn't appear to be interested in exploring Illuzzi's legal lapse. Attorney Franco, who is working with Hoofft, downplays the ethics charges against Illuzzi as recent history and suggests there was a "political aspect" to them.

But Franco was more than willing to question Illuzzi's qualifications for the job.

"Vince's attraction is that he's familiar with state government, but that doesn't mean he's got the skill set to be monitoring state spending," argues Franco, who has known Illuzzi for "35 to 40 years" and cooped with him in Vermont Law School. In terms of the résumé needed to do the senator's job, he adds, "Being a prosecutor is not very persuasive to me."

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Barbara Grimes, general manager of Burlington Electric Department, agrees. Grimes has worked closely with Haller for more than a decade, ever since he served on BED's Board of Electric Commissioners. Since then, Haller has been producing the city-owned utility's annual performance reports.

"We give numbers to Doug and he puts them in a shape that people can read and understand," she says. "If they're not easily understood, they just lack a touch of words."

Grimes says that she's always been impressed with Haller's insistence on not drawing conclusions that aren't supported by the data, as well as his willingness to put a positive spin on bad news.

"The man," Grimes adds, "somebody who is dedicated to producing accurate reports is much more qualified to be some number than a politician who has a record and history of manipulating words to get what he wants."

Haller has experience in the auditor's office. From 1990 to 2001, he worked as a paid consultant for then-auditor Flanagan during Flanagan's last terms. Thatbook, who has worked with Haller, argues he is more qualified than Flanagan to do the job and would bring a "fresh pair of eyes" to the work, without allegiance to political allies.

"Doug is very detail oriented and analytical, and he's very careful about his opinions, basing them on research and the data," Thatbook says. "He's not a shoot-from-the-hip kind of guy."

Haller doesn't bring up Flanagan's checkered past, but says it's fair to challenge the senator's recent response to the "transparency" scandal, which involved a now-retired state police sergeant accused of peddling his overtime sheets and writing fake spending tickets. Haller points out that Flanagan immediately issued a press release after the scandal broke, explaining how he would address it as auditor, including a three-point action plan.

Flanagan, he says, is "not thinking like a politician." As auditor, Haller says his own response would be to tell the overtime file, *auditor* the date,

come up with findings and then make recommendations.

"Vince slapped the hard work and said, 'I have a three-point plan,'" Haller adds. "That's not what auditors do. And that's the problem."

What are Haller's plans for his first 100 days in office? "Nothing sexy," he says, then ticks off three projects he'd like to do right away. Among them, he would immediately undertake a review of the state's personal service contracts with non-governmental entities, which now tally about \$300 million. For perspective, Haller points out, that's more than the total budget of the Agency of Transportation.

Haller would also look at whether the state department is collecting all the money owed to it. How much might Vermont be losing, not on uncollected taxes in classic Haller style, he won't

hesitate to guess. "It might be \$20. It might be \$20 million," he says. "But until we review the data, we just don't know."

Tetten suggests that Haller is smart to attack Flanagan's policies, but not his character, since such tactics rarely always backfire in Vermont politics. When Flanagan

chews thatbook out on for Flanagan Senate seat in 1993, trumpeting the senator's ethical issues, he lost badly. In his own district, it seems, Flanagan's character quirk isn't viewed as shortcomings.

"When they look at Vince, they are someone fighting for them and pushing back," Tetten says. "Look at how the Kingdom folks deal with getting harassed by the police. They drive a tractor over a bunch of police cars."

UVU's Nelson concurs. "It's the Kingdom," he says. "And the Kingdom operates in an us-them mentality. It's one of us, and we'll keep sending him back."

With Flanagan's practical politician response in the rest of Vermont? Not likely. But this year, the auditor's race may be decided by someone other than Flanagan or Haller — namely, the man at the top of the Democratic ticket: Barack Obama.

"I don't think the ethical questions are going to stick. There is much to be said in a Republican," Nelson predicts. "Someone with a D who their name will win." ☐



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# It Takes a Village

In search of community, Vermonters craft their own

BY KATHY YN FLAUG

**V**ermont has inspired its fair share of alternative lifestyles. Take the case of Ticker and Scott Stearns, radical homesteaders who moved to a farm at the foot of Stratton Mountain in 1932 seeking what they later called "the good life." The Stearns were followed by a generation of back-to-the-landers in the 1940s and '70s, clutching their copies of the Whole Earth Catalog and looking for a connection to Vermont's rolling green hills and mountains.

Today, idealists continue to found and maintain "intentional communities" in Vermont. These communities are decades old, others still just plans on paper, but all are imbued with a sense of optimism. "The idea is both simple

and almost staggeringly ambitious: looking for more authentic communities and neighborhoods, and ready to test alternative ways of living on the landscape, a small number of Vermonters are building from the ground up.

Asked to describe Fox Street Community in Charlotte, architect and founder Ted Montgomery calls it a "suburbane with a soul" — a phrase that helps a lot in defining the broad category that is "intentional community."

Most share at least some characteristics with the co-housing movement born in Denmark in the 1960s and active in the United States since the '80s. Under the co-housing model, residents live in clusters of typically smaller homes that share some space, such as a village green or community center. Such communities appeal to residents who feel single-family dwell-



A group gathers for lunch in the Cobb Hill community center.

ings are too isolating, lacking the intimate connections of smaller, interdependent groups. Some have religious missions, while others are founded on principles of sustainability, but nearly all are, in a sense, non-optional villages.

"We're more than just neighbors. We're here because we all serve some kind of ideal," says Phil Kier, a founding resident of Cobb Hill Cohousing in Stratford.

But no, these aren't communes — a misinterpretation against which several intentional communities in Vermont have battled. When participants in Cobb Hill Cohousing approached the town of Stratford with their plan, they faced questions such as "Do you wear robes?" and concerns about potential secret ceremonies in the woods. (Of the record, they don't appear to engage in either practice.) When the group of idealistic young

people behind Blue Moon Cooperative approached the town of Stratford in the 1980s, they had to convince town officials they wouldn't be a repeat of an actual commune that preceded them there in the 1960s.

These communities seek to strike a balance between individual privacy and group engagement. Is the result a "Kumbaya" singing session, or an unconcerned hell? The answer, of course, depends on the resident. Intentional communities aren't for everyone, their advocates say, and even the most picturesque ones demand that members shoulder a heavy share of hard work and pragmatic responsibility.

Seven Days spoke with residents of three of the 28 in-

the head boulder screebles over the stick-framed addition, some half dozen painters get to work staining boards.

The workshop provides hints of both the challenges and joys of living at Cobb Hill, a community devoted to sustainable-living practices and the preservation of farmland. The privately operated farm and dairy, run by two Cobb Hill residents, unfolds over the fields below. As the painters work, horses in the vision down the hill whinny and nicker, and a child in the nearest residence chatters noisily.

At the painting station, there's some bickering over the "right" way to proceed with the job. When someone voices a concern that the stain is a shade or two off, another resident jumps in with "Don't even start!"

The project is sometimes the means of the good with this messy chaos in the kitchen.

"I think it's impossible to do anything at Cobb Hill without many questions about how to do things right," quips resident Angela Park. But the day doesn't bring just bickering with many hands, the work goes quickly.

When the group settles on a technique, someone chimes in, "There's a consensus here!"

Another adds, "For once."

It's a nod to the community's decision-making structure: If you want to shove, Cobb Hill residents could vote on major decisions — a provision that Kier says the group needed to add to its bylaws to borrow

money from financial institutions. But residents have never resorted to using that provision, and instead make decisions through a mixture of consensus-based governance and consensus.

## Cobb Hill Cohousing, Hartland

Once a month, residents of Cobb Hill gather on a Saturday morning to carry up the work of maintaining their community. On this particular September day, the dozen crew needs cleaning and the solar filtration system needs a checkup, but the biggest task is the construction of an addition to the community's wood-fired furnace room.

The 40 or so adults in this community share responsibility for staining the wood-fired furnace, which heats all 22 residences at the co-housing community. This year they've added a second GAUGE brand furnace, which calls for extra space for the village's substantial woodpile. As

money from financial institutions. But residents have never resorted to using that provision, and instead make decisions through a mixture of consensus-based governance and consensus.

These decisions aren't always quick in coming, Kier says. But, he adds, "once people say agreement that we all come to a better" because of the extra time local residents it has involved.

Cobb Hill owes its start to visionary Donella Meadows, a Dartmouth College professor of systems dynamics who designed building a community around sustainable-living practices. Meadows passed away before Cobb Hill came to fruition, but meetings in her living room first inspired residents to build the village. The group bought the 280-acre former Hunt farm in Hartland in 1997, broke ground





Resident volunteers paint boards for an old pigpen at Cobb Hill's community orchard.

in 2001 and finished construction of the common house in 2004. In the process, they crafted a modern eco-village. All of the houses have composting toilets and solar panels on their roofs. While the co-creating group doesn't own any businesses itself, it encourages residents to set up "enterprises" on the farmland and does not charge them rent. Two residents own the sprawling farm at the base of the village. Others run an award-winning cheese operation.

In many respects, Cobb Hill functions like a "small town," says Judith Bush. Residents contribute dues that go into a communal pot, but it's much more complicated than the usual "pot" implies. For instance, there are reserve funds for special projects and deferred maintenance.

Ask longtime residents how Cobb Hill differs from the community of which they dreamed 10 years ago, and the answers vary. Phil Rose pauses thoughtfully, puts roller on lawn, and admits that Cobb Hill feels "a lot shorter" of what he envisioned.

"It assigned lots of magic," Rose says. The reality is that the community is "more individualistic than communal." Weekly shared meals and gatherings turned out to be difficult to schedule in a neighborhood where the pressures of the outside world — such as 9-to-5 jobs and after-school soccer practice — never disappeared.

But the picturesque village, perched on a hillside above the farm, engenders the commitment and energy of some residents. Judson Hardin remembers a couple who visited Cobb Hill a few years ago. "She kept saying, 'It's stupid,'" recalls Hardin, who is chopping green beans in the community center kitchen as she and a few other women prepare lunch for the visitors. "I didn't know how to hurt her bubble."

It's no surprise, Hardin says. Neighbors available from time to time. "We don't always get along," she adds, "but I trust everyone." Life at Cobb Hill is almost like belonging to a large, extended family, says Bush, with all of its

accommodating joys and frustrations.

"There's a huge amount of sharing on every level," Bush goes on. To her delight, that means sharing a washer and dryer with her neighbors. Tools and equipment are passed around. Bush doesn't think twice about lending her car if a neighbor asks. The community also engenders a certain generosity when the hip broke on Phil's composting toilet, she called a handy neighbor — he dashed over, and 10 minutes later the problem was fixed.

That interdependence is part of what sets Cobb Hill and other intentional communities apart from a neighborhood

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## It Takes a Village by JESS

Just past happens to "vibe" Bush thinks the difference has something to do with self-interest; because everyone owns the communal property, everyone shares in the responsibility of maintaining it.

"There's not a building paper where going to cover is and solve problems X or Problem Y" Bush says.

### Blue Moon Cooperative, South Strafford

Residents Jan Sibley says Blue Moon got its name in part from the analogy of its residents: they "move in a blue moon" would they succeed at the undertaking they envisioned. "We were very enamored of the idea of being at the end," Sibley says, "and we thought that would be easier to do together [like alone]."

Sibley and a group of 12 friends dreamed up Blue Moon when they were in their twenties. Some had just in college, others came into the field after working together in the mid-northern Connecticut Alliance. Together, they fostered a fairly "unorthodox idea": in Sibley's words, "They wanted to find a piece of land, purchase it and share ownership. Once building got under way, the group would try ideas that were 'pretty fringe' nearly 30 years ago but seem mainstream today, such as putting up photovoltaic cells and residential-scale wind turbines.

Particularly, Sibley says in retrospect, those plans took a long time to pin out: the group spent three years looking for land and backed out the members of the collective in the meantime.

"In our idealism, we could underestimate the need for some structures that over time would become even more important," Sibley says. The group in created Randolph lawyer Leslie Lusk, who advised members to incorporate as

a cooperative and helped them draft detailed bylaws and paperwork that an still used today by cooperatives around the country.

"We have good friends," says Sibley, invoking the Robert Frost line "Good fences make good neighbors." Sibley helped to build them. They don't divide as, but they do demonstrate that respect initiatives to each other and ourselves."

Remarkably, the same group has remained intact for 20 years. Twice it has expanded to welcome a new member to the cooperative — a decision that, just like purchasing a new truck or cutting down a tree, had to be reached by consensus. Sibley, who says he knows of intentional communities where tensions flared and residents no longer spoke to one another, credits Blue Moon success to its clear structure and balance of privacy and communal living. One summer, the eldest of the children, who grew up at Blue Moon got married on the property — just the latest example, Sibley says, of how the group pulls together for celebrations and sorrows.

"We were pretty young, and very idealistic," he says, looking back at Blue Moon's evolution. "There's a big element of luck, that nobody has just changed completely their minds" but the gamble paid off, and more than two decades later, the idealistic dreamers behind Blue Moon are older, wiser — and every bit as committed to their intentional community.

### Ten Stones Community, West Charlotte

Ten Stones began as architect Ted Montgomery's 1972 dream: then, morphed into a collective (discreet) of a new housing development, and ended up a crisp and compact neighborhood, tucked among the rolling hills of West Charlotte.

On a crisp morning in mid-September, Rebecca Foster is fixing the 50 or so



Ten Stones Community (by JESS)



Tim Mont, owner

children that check and praise around a pen near the Ten Stones community center. Her family shares evening duties of the luxurious home with five others; in return, the six households divide the beauty of each house.

It's a living with the modern openness of Ten Stones, where projects such as the sprawling community garden, a new array of solar panels and, yes, the chickens are all voluntary.

It almost didn't happen. Montgomery and a group of about 20 residents in and around Charlotte spent years forming

**THERE'S SORT OF  
THIS PREDISPOSITION,  
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REBECCA POSTER,  
TEN STONES COMMUNITY

From there, the evolving group still faced an uphill battle. Montrose had to convince the town of Charlotte to let their cluster development in a way that looked unusual to the town zoning board, rather than build individual houses on five-acre lots. They chose an outrageous ask: residents divided a "green" and began donating up lots. In 1994, the first house went up. The first — for a herd of 18 headings housing 17 families — were built over the next five years.

Remarkably, Montgomery waited several years before building his own home at Ten Stones — and, in fact, he admits he almost didn't join. The neighborhood had not met the compound he'd conceived in his college thesis. He imagined designing all the homes, he recalls, using radical, trend-setting approaches. In the end, most homeowners just hired builders,

and today the community looks more like a quiet country neighborhood than an architect's experiment.

But what succeeded Montgomery's experiment, he says, was the sense of enlightenment that blossomed in Ten Stones. When Montgomery's late wife, Sarah, was diagnosed with a brain tumor, he watched as neighbors crowded into the couple's garden on two separate occasions to sing to her.

"That's the priceless thing," says Montgomery. "Everybody in the community was supportive."

There's been turnover in the years since Poster is one of the newer residents (she and her family moved to Ten Stones two years ago). A "For Sale by Owner" sign in "Ten Stones" driveway advertises the one property for sale in the community.

Poster moved to Ten Stones from New York City, where the concept of a co-op is familiar in the world of apartment complexes. She thinks Ten Stones strikes a "really nice balance" between independence and community. Poster's two children were raised on the green, playing with neighborhood kids, and she and her husband dabble in farming and equestrianism.

While she knows about the trouble of the early days, Poster says she bought into a mature community where the links are mostly solid. One she was elected a "steward" of the ongoing committee, and knows from experience, she says, that the system works incredibly smoothly.

"It's very touching to see people help each other," Poster remarks, smiling the walking dirt road around Ten Stones. "There's sort of a predisposition, when you live here, to cooperating." ☺

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# Book It

A guide to the eighth annual Burlington Book Festival

BY MIKE GARR, MARISSA HARRIS, SONIA KEEMAN, and WAHSH



Tracy K. Smith

## BOOKS

### Poetry Pick A PUBLIC TALK WITH ERIC TEMPERATES THE UNKNOWN

**P**oetry, says Tracy K. Smith, we lucky. In an interview with *Playhouse* earlier this year, the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet insisted, "It is a part of my process. In fact, I'd go so far as to say that poetry, as a practice, necessitates a sense of joy. It's exhilarating to come into contact with the things we write into being."

It's a refreshing sentiment, and one that provides Smith's latest book of verse, *Life on Mars* (2011), in the collection, an eager curiosity allows Smith to move freely between the textures of the familiar and unfamiliar — between, for instance, David Bowie and Mars. She is uniquely able to retain a sense of down-to-earth human struggle within a liberating universe.

In the poem "My God, It's Public Space" we are seamlessly transported from Chertown, Houston

to Moses in the far reaches of the Middle Space Telescope's sight — and back to the poet's father's tobacco pipe — in a matter of seconds. In that poem, Smith evokes a vision asking the speaker, "Will you fight to stay alive here, riding the earth / Toward God-knows where?" Instantly, the setting changes.

*I think of Atlanta buried  
under ice, gone  
One day from sight, the show  
from which it rose new  
glacial and stark  
Our eyes adjust to the dark*

This graceful teleportation is perhaps an apt gift, for Smith, the known and the unknown, the near and the far, seem always to have occupied a shared space. Her father was an engineer who worked on the Hubble telescope when she was a young girl. And she wrote *Life on Mars* while living in the space between two volunteer programs in the wake of her father's death. But, as Smith told *Playhouse*, beyond her own personal experience, the

book isn't "quite so much a collection of what we know or have experienced as the framework for imagining what we cannot know, and what we have yet experienced. That's why metaphor counts."

Smith has done well for herself in that world that we all know she is the author of two other collections of poetry — *Devotion* (2007), which won both the 2008 James Laughlin Award from the Academy of American Poets and an Essence Literary Award, and *The Body's Question* (2009), which won the 2002 Coretta Scott King Poetry Prize. From 1997 to 1998, she was a Margaret Fuller in Poetry at Stanford University, and she currently teaches creative writing at Princeton University.

Smith will read at BEEF as part of the eighth annual Cause Poetry Series on Saturday, September 23, at 4 p.m. in the Pils House at Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center.

by WAH



## FICTION PICK A LESBIAN COMES OF AGE IN THE HEARTLAND

**T**he tender narrative of Emily in *Daughter's Debt* novel, *The Misadventure of Cameron Post* (GWL), is 13 when she first loses a girl. The next day when she learns both her parents have died in an accident, Cameron's first reaction is relief—because now they'll never know.

Set in Miles City, Mont., in the early 1980s, the novel takes the innocent Cameron from junior high to first love, and from her consumption of a crash on a freeway to its disastrous consequence: banishment to an academy called God's Promise for "sexually delinquent" teens.

The tape could easily land itself as broad satire, but *Daughter's Debt* goes to lengths to lay bare the author's subtle rage. The novel's Christian dialogues are belted-out characters. As for Cameron's fellow "disciples": An ex-Gayle's Native American who insists he's "pre-judged" and a pot-growing girl named Jane Tonde.

Cameron first is told in such discipline: literacy, poetry, and pull to new peaches—discipline to teach characters drink, talk, and make out—that some readers may be surprised to learn it's a young adult novel. On National Public Radio, Mahalia Lewis called it "definitely and beautifully written story" that's "certainly also meant for adult readers."

Thirteen-year-old daughter, who lives in Providence, R.I., and teaches at Rhode Island College, will read from the book as part of the Women's Work series at Phoenix Books in Birmingham on Sunday at 2 p.m. We spoke to her on the phone.

**SEVEN DAYS:** You've said in interviews that *Cameron Post* is not just "Where



Emily M. Davidson

**did the inspiration for this character come from?**

**EMILY M. DAVIDSON:** She is a character who is informed by my own experience, but in every odd I see a fictional version of me would be a stretch. The thing that me and Cameron have most in common is that we both grew up gay in a town in eastern Montana at a time when that was certainly not embraced.

I was back in my old teenage bedroom, and I read a series of articles about the case of a 16-year-old boy in Tennessee named Zach Stark who was being sent to conversion-therapy camp and it caught the attention of the national media. What was interesting to me in that story, as a fiction writer, was the way in which [Stark] was conflicted. At that time, he wasn't fully embracing the word "gay." He was calling himself Christian, and he didn't see how he could be both of those things. I started doing research because of that.

**SD:** When writing about people who try to "pray away the gay," or convert/evangelize Christians in general, it can be hard to sort out villainous stereotypes. How



**did you get into the skins of these characters?**

**ED:** The only desire of many of those characters were pretty concrete with I had to get into the drawing board with several of them and figure out, how do I make these people, and not project for some kind of message? If you choose to devote your life to this, you're committed this is helping the people you're offering this to. It comes from this incredibly unguarded but this good impulse [Cameron's] Aunt Ruth believes she's for only person looking out for the eternal salvation of her niece.

**SD:** Miles City is where you grew up. Is it still as conservative as it's portrayed in the book? Have you your book been received there?

**ED:** It's come a long way in terms of LGBTQ visibility in the town. I did not know anyone who was out in my entire adolescence in Miles City. Certainly there are now people who feel more comfortable being open about it. I'm going back [there] as a fine week for a community conversation about bullying and diversity.

That's a conversation that I can't imagine even having happened 30 years ago.

People have been really supportive, and one day, people I didn't even know that went to high school, several of them told me they knew me and bought the book, and they loved themselves, but they were pleasantly surprised. I think it is part as a love letter to Miles City, as difficult as parts of growing up there were.

**SD:** You and your agent tried pitching this book to editors of adult fiction before calling it a young adult. How is YA changing? What makes it especially receptive to a book like this?

**ED:** I don't think a "young adult" is a genre. I think it fits as a marketing category. One of the few universals that it features adolescents. There is a lot of gray area in terms of readability, the audience for these books. I think there's something universal about a coming-of-age story. I've felt very embraced by all kinds of readers. [I've heard from] professors in their forties who said, "I never would have found this book if I hadn't read the NPR review."

**SD:** Have you read from teen readers?

**ED:** I do have teenagers who have told me that "some of my experiences are like yours." My parents were not welcoming to my sexuality or my structure because of the way religion was passed down. I was "labeled" that being really changed for a lot of teenagers. [For today] it's much easier to log on to the internet and find some sort of community that's given you representation. The book is exposing [present-day teens] to this [early 1980s] queer culture, that just that they didn't know was out there. I do think they're relating to it.

M.H.

PHOTO: JESSICA KIMBLE

BOOK IT #39



BY TAYLOR LEE

ART BY JEFFREY

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## Book It

### MEET THE AUTHOR

MORE WRITERS TO CATCH AT BBF  
—AND WHAT TO ASK THEM AT THE Q&A



#### ALISON BECHDEL

(Saturday 1 p.m., Film House Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center)

**Out this year:** *Are You My Mother? A Comic Drama*

**Ask her:** I hear this movie your first graphic memoir *Fun Home* into a musical (as far as we know) at Northfield Public Theater in October. How does it seem possible to make this so long?

#### EMILY BERNARD

(Sunday 1 p.m., Phoenix Books Burlington)

**Out this year:** *Carl Hiaasen's & the Machine* (Hiaasen: A Hiaasen's & the Machine)

**Ask her:** I'd like to see the new novel *Van Hiaasen* — it's a writer who I'd like to see in the popular (and African American) arena — but I'm not sure about her relations in the past.

#### PAUL FLEISCHMAN

(Saturday 11 a.m., Black Box Theater Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center)

**Known for:** *Scorpions* (the 2005 Hornet Road selection) and numerous other award-winning children's books. His dad was celebrated kids author Ted Hughes.

**Ask him:** Your website says you have a forthcoming "campaign trail comedy for adults" about a persistent diagnosis to your mother. Tell us more.

#### MICHAEL HASTINGS

(Saturday 4 p.m., Black Box Theater Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center)

**Out this year:** *The Operatives*. The latest and best-selling book of fiction in the series.

**Ask him:** Your reporting from Afghanistan has been criticized for leading to the firing of Ben Suleyman. In Chicago. On your website still have your in a digital age and if you know should they use it?

#### BILL MCKIBBIN

(Saturday 11 a.m., Film House Theater Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center)

**Out this year:** *A July 10th* (Stoner: A July 10th)

**Ask him:** Including *Stoner*, you describe your passion for writing and global warming as "global" but not up to finally hope. What does this mean? Should I be learning how to talk to my wife first instead of checking the purchase of an iPhone 3?

#### JAY PARINI

(Saturday 12 p.m., Black Box Theater Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center)

**Known for:** *Academy of Art, Fiction and Poetry*. The magazine of the New York University Press.

**Ask him:** How did it feel having Helen Merrell speak your design (or the film version of the last edition)?

#### HOWARD FRANK MOSHER

(Saturday 1 p.m., Film House Theater Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center)

**Out this year:** *The Great Northern Express: A Northern Journey*

**Ask him:** You're known for your 10-year and the Northern Express. Is your latest is the memoir of a road trip back to your native state. If you know about this one to film what do you want to play your

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## A STUDENT'S SURVIVAL GUIDE TO THE BURLINGTON BOOK FESTIVAL

**A** attendee at the BBF is mandatory for some Burlington-area college students, for others, it's a chance to earn extra credit. Though there are a lot of great events and presentations to attend, it can be tough to figure out how to survive three days of them. Here are 10 tips that will help you weather the fair!



1. If you've seen extra points by making it a special event, bring a book. It will take you about 10 minutes.
2. If you still don't understand what Vermont post-graduate (PG) fees are, ask a friend who has a plan of Post-graduate (PG) fees to help.
3. Go to the Video Blogging for Beginners seminar and take a class. It's a class on YouTube with three videos. Don't have one yet? Make one and get your points. (It's free, at least, by Saturday.)
4. You can probably skip the book signings, but if you just want an incentive to read, then you have to know that it's free, so honestly just go to the signings.
5. If you realize you're going to give time at college drinking and playing video games in library pursuits, make up a post for a manuscript and tell everyone you're stuck in the middle. No one will actually read yours.
6. Alcohol will be your friend.
7. Don't go to the Adirondack Book Festival. Adirondack Book Festival is a book festival and George has no idea. (Not really, I had

8. Go to Dave Krieger and his friends. Go to the "Thinking of Self Publishing" seminar and sign up one of the books. (It's free, at least, by Saturday.)
9. If you get bored on Saturday, go to the presentation on how to be a book reviewer. (It's free, at least, by Saturday.)
10. If all else fails, pay someone to go for you. (It's free, at least, by Saturday.)

M. G.

## FINDING YOUR SHELF

If you want to self-publish, check out Saturday's two workshops (10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) at the Fletcher Free Library under the auspices of Fletcher's Chapman College's independent publishing group. They cover everything from the "big question" to a practical editing, blogging and book orders.

If you're not sure you're a good fit for the workshops, check out the book "The Book" by David M. Smith. It's on display at the Fletcher Free Library's Chapman College Center (1 to 5 p.m.). The book is a collection of North America's best short stories and is a collection of "the best" and "the worst" of the book.

If you want to know how to use the book, check out the book "The Book" by David M. Smith. It's on display at the Fletcher Free Library's Chapman College Center (1 to 5 p.m.). The book is a collection of North America's best short stories and is a collection of "the best" and "the worst" of the book.

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M. G.

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# Swing State

Vermont's West Coast Swing scene blossoms in Burlington

BY MEGAN JAMES



Nothing is quite as thrilling as being asked to dance. But, if you don't frequent formal dances and you're not in middle school, it can be a woefully rare occurrence.

Unless you find yourself at a swing-dance convention, as I did last weekend, when some 200 dancers from around the region flocked to the second annual Vermont Swing Dance Championships at the Hampton Inn in Colchester. As a newcomer to the competitive dance scene, and fresh from a viewing of the *Lakers' Strictly Ballroom*, I half expected to find a convention hall filled with bedazzled boys, leg hair and back-biting competition.

I couldn't have been further off base (although I did spot two women sporting sexy, sheer tops over "intentional" bras). The New England swing-dance scene, unlike *Lakers'* fictional *Assau* ballroom community, is made up of down-to-earth types of all ages, and they seemed to be in it simply for the love of dancing. And did they ever dance, under dimmed chandeliers, for three days straight last week.

Vermont's swing scene hasn't always been as vibrant. Karen Graham, a Lowell-based dance instructor who organized last weekend's event, began swing dancing in the Upper Valley in 1995. "I was bored," she said with a smile. "Single and bored." When a newspaper ad for a swing-dance class caught her eye, she decided to give it a try.

**TO THE UNINITIATED, IT WAS AN EXPLOSION OF HIP SWIRLING, DEEP DIPPING AND UNBRIDLED CHEMISTRY. UNBELIEVABLY, NO ONE OF IT WAS CHOREOGRAPHED.**

Graham was hooked. "I was so intrigued by it, the whole world," she said. She began teaching in Lowell, Rutland and Middlebury, and attended swing events around the country. But there were no "official" competitors in the region — meaning none sponsored by the World Swing Dance Council, which awards points that allow dancers to advance through levels. So Graham started

one. This official championship, she said, "puts Vermont on the map." She's already gearing up for next year's event, at Stratton Mountain Resort.

By 8 a.m. on Friday night, the dance floor at the Hampton Inn was filling up, but there was half an hour to kill before the first competition was scheduled to begin. So I pepped into the room next

to the dance floor for a hair dress. She grabbed a plain black sock: from the discount table, and I tried it on for size. When I reflectively splurged for the refinement of my feet, which had been smothered all day without socks in my old Converse All Stars, Carr laughed. "We're dancers," she said proudly. "We know stinky feet."

Then Carr took me out to the dance floor for a hair dress. The basic step in West Coast Swing — as opposed to East Coast Swing, or Lindy Hop, which wasn't part of last weekend's event — goes like this: walk, walk, triple step, slow, slow, quick-quick-quick. I got flustered, but Carr was encouraging. "Regardless of how much you know, there are plenty of leads out there who will dance with you," she assured.

Back in the shop, Jo Ann Caruso, a Massachusetts-based dancer and professional literacy coach who helped Graham publicize the event, had just bought a new pair of caramel-colored sandals. Caruso, 60, began dancing seven years ago. How did she get into swing? "Well, I got divorced," she said. "Two jobs wanted to dance, but my ex-husband was never interested."

Carruso came to West Coast Swing the way many people do: she started with the Lindy Hop. But once she discovered the more improvisational West Coast version, she didn't want to go back. "There's an elasticity, a rubber-band quality about [West Coast Swing]," Caruso said. "It's a style of moving that lends itself to a lot of creativity."

That creativity was on full display at Friday night's competition, which began with a showcase of regional pros. To the uninitiated, it was an explosion of hip swirling, deep dipping and unbridled chemistry. Unbelievably, none of it was choreographed.

When Montreal dancer Estelle Bonnette and her partner took the floor — to a song the DJ had chosen at random — they moved with such fluidity, it was as if they were two sides of the same body. With her black hair, leather earrings and slow, teasing hips, Bonnette was captivating. Another Canadian dancer, wearing, leered over to me and whispered, "This is the couple that's going to win."

PHOTO BY MEGAN JAMES

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PHOTO BY MEGAN JAMES

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## Swing State

When most people think summer, they think big-band music. But here's the other cool thing about West Coast swing: You can do it to anything, contemporary pop music included. Case in point: One gro couple performed Friday night to Carly Rae Jepsen's incessant song of the summer, "Call Me Maybe."

The competition continued with a wild event called "Thru's Company," in which one man leads two women simultaneously. "I wanted a signature competition event," and Grubbs, noting that this one isn't actually recognized by the World Swing Dance Council. Official competition rules still require that a couple consist of one man and one woman, with the man leading and the women following.

But at the Hampton Inn, Scott Chislett twirled two women like spinning tops. Chislett, who was dressed entirely in black — from his thin webster tie to his suede dance shoes — is largely responsible for the growing West Coast swing scene in Manhattan.



Over the past year and a half, the 22-year-old IBM engineer has been offering Burlington Music classes and dances at North End theatre Cool her improvisations, enthusiastic but far from nerdy. Childsot strikes just the right balance in appeal to a wide range of

students. And he has infused the local scene with a healthy dose of sensism. As he declares on his website, "West Coast Swing is the most fun you can have with your clothes on."

Three years ago, Chilsenitz was a grad student in Illinois, "bored under work," he said. "I needed to balance out my life." He discovered West Coast swing and became addicted: but when Chilsenitz moved to Burlington after graduating, the closest Wurbies he could find were in White River Junction. Teaching in Burlington "was a selfish thing," he said. "I wanted someone to dance with."

The competition wrapped up at around 10:30 p.m. on Friday, but then the night really began. Dancers flooded the ballroom floor, while others took the elevator down to the more intimate blues

I had never heard of blues dancing, so I followed Childs' directions, where he and a friend from Montreal demonstrated. "The guy-who-doesn't-dance shuffle is basically beginner blues," explained Childs with a smirk. The steps are simpler and slower, and, except when the leader is twisting

or dipping his partner, dancers stay in a tight embrace.

The dancing continued until 3. "Last night," I remarked to a group of chattering dancers riding the elevator back up to the ballroom. They all laughed. "That's early!" one woman exclaimed. At her last competition, she added, everybody danced until 7 a.m. Then they had breakfast, took a power nap, strapped on their dancing shoes and started all over again.

So it was no surprise, when I returned the next morning at 10, to find the hall room packed – and hopping. So was the room next door, where participants in a beginner class were learning the basics of leading and following. “That’s pretty good,” I heard an instructor say. “Now do it with your eyes closed.” 20

**i** Weekly beginner classes in West Coast Swing start on Tuesday October 3 7-8 p.m. at North End Club in Burlington. \$40 for four week series or \$10 for students. [www.bowling.com](http://www.bowling.com)

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# Building Character

BOOKS

Book review: *Nathaniel Purple* by F.D. Reeve

BY AMY LILLY

A few chapters into F.D. Reeve's recent novel, *Nathaniel Purple*, I had it tugged at in a poet's fit not attempt at fiction. The plot cuts awkwardly between the peaceful domestic life of a librarian narrator—an undeveloped character—and the senseless brutality of an abusive former neighbor. The winning librarian lurches unexpectedly from poetic genre to interesting dialogue to perplexing references: “As the morning wore on, spreading what the Chamber of Commerce calls its unstable refugeness on Haystack Mountain, the phone in the library kept ringing off the hook,” reads one of the last cases (sentence fragments and wittily crutches such as the stink do heavy work, as in “in women weeping/lost weeping”).

My first assumption was incorrect. The Washington author, now in his early eighties, has written five previous novels, the first of which was published in 1981.

Reeve is better known as a poet, the 5'4" old man who has partially gained both praise and awards. So why would he write another novel?

Forming for the same reason that drives a lot of writing in Vermont, the wish to poetry small-town life in the Green Mountains in all its anachronism and timelessness. And this theme does quite well.

*Nathaniel Purple* takes place in a small village in “these years after the Gulf War” (whether the 5'4" or the second is unclear). The village “seems a toy set, an architect's cardboard diorama” to the narrator, Nathaniel Purple, as he sits atop

his house, Crystal, on his meandering ride through the hills, but he knows it is anything but. A feud between two families, the Andersens and the Swoyers, is coming to a head, and the outcome will doom the town together.

The antagonist is Carl Andersen, an uneducated dairy farmer who resents his older daughter for having gone to college and shows his gun in the general direction of his younger daughter when he finds her sleeping with the Swoyer boy. When Carl discovers that his wife, a cleaning woman named Gertrude, is having an affair with John Swoyer, his son, he loses it, bashing the men over in death with a piece of furniture. In an “angry mob” scene right out of the movie *Presidentsmen*, the town's main concern and resolve to make Carl pay for his actions “‘I'm for making a posse and going a visit to Mr. Andersen. Who's with me?’ one villager shouts. But before they can, Carl sets his own own damn side and goes down with it, intentionally or not.

Nathaniel is a pitiable, educated type who admires the “epitaphical perfection” of his study, the 5'4" not word

three means “domestic” and was last used around 1890. To the working-class villagers with a more limited vocabulary and worse grammar, he's “Mister Purple” (The name cries out for explanation, could Reeve be making a self-deprecating reference to his own purple prose? Just also, the sense of humor evident in his most recent book of poetry, *The Puzzle Master*, is largely absent here.) Rather unbelievably, Mister Purple seems about being “as dated as Swedenborg” with his belated, Catherine, yet when he steps in for a Long Trial at the local pub, the all-male clientele call him “Nat” and expect him to have the inside scoop on town gossip.

Reeve creates a more believable character in the wife helper, Carl, who can spell his dog, Ted, with trash and then viciously swing at him without missing a beat. Carl professes his love to the females in his life because “they remained kind, their heads nodding

and their tails flicking approval whenever his plans were being rolled, they yielded to his needs.” There's also the French Canadian general-store owner, Annie Tremblay, with his master butcher's son and it tied French cooking and the town doctor, Jack Everts, who won't charge patients he knows can't pay.

These are characters we've seen before, if not outright stereotypes. If anything, Reeve celebrates that familiarity by placing them in a land of historical acts that renders them eternal. The Andersen-Swoyer feud is tied to the “word-killing legend

genesis” of 17th-century Vermont. Not to be surrounded by three hundred years of ferocity inside his home. A memory of falling in love with Catherine is followed by another one rather pathetically described as occurring “some 200,000 contemporary years later.”

Whether the readers the novel's characters and events are more or less interesting—does nothing change?—is a matter for the reader to decide. In the meantime, one wishes Reeve's next novel would offer a few or fewer obscure references to cosmological years and Chamber of Commerce brochures, and more sentences of pure poetry like this one: “The lemon scented falling on the pond fill on the dead, mixing them into the long tops of the willows half-night, folding them into the long tops of the willows.” ☐

**I** *Nathaniel Purple* by F.D. Reeve. [ReeveBooks.blogspot.com](http://ReeveBooks.blogspot.com)  
Hardcover, 208 pages, \$24.95



## FROM NATHANIEL PURPLE

A tall white spire in the Gargoyles (Church in the distance) glared at us. It took the old cemetery with its faded stones and pieces of granite slabs among 1,500 of graves and one or two recently graves that picked three hundred years. *Nathaniel Purple* (F.D. Reeve's novel)  
A morning was misty flammations of "omniscience" side. Auburn.

I saw old Auburn in the misty dawn, standing on the hill above the town, looking to the side. For so lately had we had our way into his hollow car from across from. For lately had we not solitary there—

I looked the simplicity of the early spring. Catherine was born up and about and had come to sleep up clapping on the stove.

What would you think? I said I hear in the in-lay. I wrote and a morning dawn misty about made it a and then, if we took the car to the church!

Should be a perfect day for it, she said. "Of your better ideas provided you present not, in spirit like a horse." After breakfast, I hurried to Crystal to the car, she looked at longingly—and we passed her half down to the church when I lost the car in a regular parking space but loved Crystal inside and was to be a child and we had made her that to a one out there.

Everyone was paid to us, perfect Crystal, who lived the first day. For so lately had we had our way into his hollow car from across from.

Friends were already gathering in the vestibule, couples in groups of four or five looking the very members of the choir chanting brotherly love, sitting off to go down a side as it to now, when picking up packets of programs and checking each other's books and set that taking up their positions and the side of the center aisle.



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# Organic Food Fight

Vermonters weigh in on the Stanford food study

BY CORIN HIRSCH

**I**n the produce section of the Store's Shelburne Road, a 5 1/2-ounce bag of organic potatoes costs \$5.99. *erby*, an equal-weight bag of conventional potatoes goes for \$3.49. Am I delirious to shell out extra money for the organic tubers? According to the now-infamous Stanford University study on organic versus conventional food, it's a debate maybe.

Two weeks ago, the California researchers published a study titled "Are Organic Foods safer or Healthier Than Conventional Alternatives?" in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Within hours, the story had blown up. Though the lay public could only read an abstract — rather than the full study — where the gist of the findings was clear from a slew of headlines, including "Stanford Scientists Cast Doubt on Advantages of Organic Meat and Produce" (*New York Times*), "Why Organic Food May Not Be Healthier for You" (*The Salt*), food blog of National Public Radio, "Study: It may organic food is no better on vitamins, nutrients" (*Associated Press*), and "Organic food is as dangerous as factory-farmed food, study shows" (*usatoday.com*).

Well, duh. I don't buy organic beefs because I think they have more magnesium or vitamin C than a beef grown on a conventional farm. But these researchers assumed that many people do, and aggregated 17 banana and 223 food studies to find that "when it comes to certain nutrients, there is not much difference between organic and conventionally grown food" (*Alamy Times Union*), and that E. coli was present in roughly equal amounts in both kinds of food, perhaps even more in organic poultry.

However, readers who made it past the first few paragraphs of the study learned that 38 percent of conventional produce contained "detectable



pesticide residues," versus only 7 percent of organic food. Organic meat had fewer antibiotic-resistant bacteria than conventional meat, and organic milk was denser with fatty acids than conventional milk.

It was a confusing jumble of information, and the study lacked any discussion of the potential carcinogenic

effects of the herbicides, pesticides and fungicides that linger on conventionally grown grapes, apples, spinach and potatoes.

Over subsequent days, a flood of stories continued in the same maddening vein. On NPR, science correspondent Shankar Vedantam cited a study claiming that "emotional values"

help swayed our decisions to buy organic. Those of us who do as tend to value strength, benevolence and spirituality. "Organic food has gotten wrapped up in all sorts of these values that don't necessarily have to do with the specific things that science studies," Vedantam said.

I may be skeptical, but I don't think I

ORGANICFOOD FIGHT #9 #10

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# SIDEdishes

BY CORIN HIRSH & ALICE LEVITT

## Belgian Beginnings

THE CRISP, OPENING NEXT WEEK, the staff is in place, construction is coming to a close, and snazzy cocktail cups are about to arrive. If all goes well, Burlington will be able to welcome **BEYVO** to 145 Church Street on Wednesday, September 26.

What will be on the menu? Options range from modest crêpe fillings, such as strawberry-Nutella and smoked ham with cheese, to the more creative. A shrimpo-style crêpe is filled with mushrooms, garbanzo crackers and Belgian chocolate.



Native Belgian **PETER** **CRÊPE** a pancake also include a free called **napier** crêpes that also dines on a world tour. Sager Diner is filled with Moroccan meat, chicken, carrots, green olives, tomatoes, fresh spinach and feta. Sager Mediterranean cuisine of spicy lamb sausage with roasted bell peppers, caramelized onions, fresh spinach, basil and herb oil. Vegetarian options include cashew-based on shaved kumquat and mini-sardines, mozzarella and olives, or even spiced pears and blue cheese.

For diners seeking something outside the realm of the wrap, Mr. Crêpe has daily special plates in shrimpo-style Yukon Gold-potato potato, feta and pears, and pears, provide healthy alternatives — and could help eaters

save room for dessert. Crêpe, who also owns the **NAPIER** **CRÊPE** chain that serves many a Vermont diner, is offering the same memorable Belgian sugar waffles at his new restaurant.

— A. L.

## Mixing Again

BEVO BEGINS AT COCKTAIL LOUNGE

The door of Colchester's **BEVO** isn't a revolving one — the owners, **KEVIN KUTCHEN** and **AMANDA STONE**, the place's identity, however, keeps evolving. Last year, it opened and closed as a restaurant, but stayed in use as a private event space and catering company. Now 70 Roosevelt

## Logan's Run

LOGAN'S OF VERMONT, 30 MAIN STREET, BURLINGTON 400-1800

**NICK LOGAN** was planning to have a soft first few days when he opened the doors to **LOGAN'S OF VERMONT** on Monday, September 10. "We just were trying to get in here and get our feet under us and get our systems working," the chef-owner says. When lunchtime lines began forming, though, he took it in stride, and now says, "We were quite happy with the response."

Logan credits the "effort" Burlington waterfront community with the rush, saying it's been welcoming and eager to help out his fledgling business. The appeal of his food doesn't hurt.



Logan's serves Mondays through Saturdays, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., starting each day with breakfast pastries such as Bananas and coffee cake. They're made by pastry chef **LOUIE KOSMAN**, most recently of **CAVAT** in Burlington and **ON THE BLUE** in Burlington, and his assistant, **AMANDA STONE**. At lunchtime, pastries change daily, but they're always served on Logan's own bread. Daily choices included ham, apple and chive with sausage chutney and a classic Cuban with sliced pork loin, ham, pickles, butter and Dijon. Soups, salads and sandwiches are also available to take out or eat on a toasty on the flaky-fillet deck. Inside, Logan's sells a selection of products that go into the dishes, such as vinegars and oils.

But Logan, also most recently of **Cloud 9** in Colchester, says his new business' raison d'être is taking meals. Diners range from Black Angus sirloin to pan-seared chicken with French onion to grilled salmon with steamed veggies. Some are ready to heat and eat, others are raw and require the touch of a home cook. Like the pastries, offerings change daily. For now, customers must call or stop in to learn the day's options. But Logan says he hopes to have an email list, website and Facebook page soon.

— A. L.

coches — chips smothered in homemade ranchero sauce and Monterey Jack cheese.

"We might do some other things, but were trying to keep it simple," says Kathleen Stone, the chef that

the cocktail nights are partly intended to give locals a peek at the space to help it keep it in mind for future events.

— A. L.

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food

## Organic Food Fight 9.27.10

pop extra for organic food because I have my neighbor. I buy organic potatoes because I don't want to ingest a cocktail of chlorophyll, o-p-henylbenzol and diethyl each time I eat one (organic potatoes taste better, too.)

I tried but failed to reach the local Stanford researcher to ask her some questions. "Dr. [Crystal] Mendez-Santiago and her co-authors have been inundated with calls and emails, unfortunately, we can't accommodate your interview request," was the response I received.

(The *Gay Lady* got through, though.) Debra M. Erwin, one of the paper's senior authors, told the *New York Times*, "When we began this project, we thought that there would likely be some findings that would support the superiority of organics over conventional food. I think we were definitely surprised."

Surely a surprise result bolstered the study's cred?

With no researchers to consult, I phoned the University of Vermont Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences and heard back from Jane Kolodinsky, chair of community development and applied economics ("not a chemist," she emphasized), who used to head the school's food-systems apter. Kolodinsky, who has studied obesity, school-lunch programs and local foods, said her students had had a spirited discussion about the controversial study earlier that day. After reading the entire study herself (a perk of academic online access), she asserted that the data had been skewed both by the press and by the study's title.

"If you look at what [the researchers] really analyze, they really look at the safety issue," Kolodinsky said. "I don't believe that's where the organic movement has come from."

She also suggested that the organic label may be luring ground to consumers' interest in local foods, at least if Vermont is a harbinger.



THE STUDY  
LACKED ANY  
DISCUSSION  
OF THE POTENTIAL  
CARCINOGENIC  
EFFECTS  
OF THE HERBICIDES,  
PESTICIDES AND  
FUNGICIDES  
THAT LINGER ON  
CONVENTIONALLY  
GROWN GRAPES,  
APPLES, SPINACH  
AND POTATOES.

"Especially, if you were to ask Vermonters, they are very interested in organic and local. But if they were given a choice, they would choose the locally produced, conventional alternative" over something produced organically.

Further swap, Kolodinsky said. "[Organic] used to mean something more than fewer pesticides and antibiotics," she added. "I think organic has been losing its meaning to larger and larger corporations are getting into the game."

One Vermont company that has benefited from the ongoing growth of organic foods — an industry that exploded from sales of \$2.6 billion in 1987 to \$16.7 billion in 2008 — is Johnson's Deep Root Organic Co-op. The 26-year-old cooperative gathers and sells organic produce from 80 farms across the state. Deep Root's sales were up 46 percent in the first part of this year, according to sales manager Anthony Mirrechia, and 88 percent of those sales were outside Vermont.

Mirrechia believes the Stanford study "really isn't a bomb-shattering news for the organic world." He envisions who still opt for organic food, "It usually comes down to a lot more than the nutritional aspect," he said. There's still enough growth in organic food that Deep Root is seeing increased competition from "traditional farms coming into the organic scene and trying to cut out the markets," Mirrechia noted. "We really can't compete with their pricing."

Of the farmers he works with, he said, "I really don't know anyone who was into it, at least from the farming side, for the nutritional aspect."

One of Deep Root's farmers is Josh Soucie of Cabot's Freewater Farm, which received its organic certification from the Northeast Organic Farming

More food after the classified section. [sevendaysvt.com](http://sevendaysvt.com)



## || SIDEdishes

BY COURTNEY ANDERSON

### The Dark Beer Doth Flow

UNLAWFUL HANDS BREWING OPENS IN CABOT

Just in time for the first frost, the state's newest microbrewery — **UNLAWFUL HANDS BREWING** in Cabot — has opened with a focus on small batches of dark beers.

On September 8, brewer **ROCKY McLAUGHLIN** offered samples of his early success at his Route 2 microbrewery. They included a robust porter called *Spice Change*, a black IPA, Cinnamon Sarsaparilla, an American brown ale, Tose, and an American stout, Courage. He's brewing each in 20-gallon batches, making them available for growler fills on the second Saturday of each month. McLaughlin, who

runs the brewery with his wife, **AMY**, eventually plans to bottle his brews. Announcing the launch, **MARK STANFORD**, executive director of the **VERMONT BEERERS ASSOCIATION**, called Vermont the "Disneyland of beer," citing the fact that no other U.S. state has more breweries per capita than any other. Vermont is on its way to being the state to edge closer to beer-themed park status in coming months. Burlington, Montpelier, Stowe and South Jayville are all on track to host new microbreweries, possibly by year's end.

Find Unlawful Hands at 121 Route 2 in Cabot, 249-4092.

— CM

2 **PHOTO BY** Thomas Farina  
Unlawful Hands brewer Rocky McLaughlin  
with brewer Amy McLaughlin. Photo by Thomas Farina

Association (OSOA) this past year. When I reached him, he had been so busy tending 7000 Brussels sprouts plants that he hadn't heard about the Stanford study.

Bourne said that he and his colleagues, Lindsay Scott and Dawn Andrews, went through the organic certification process not only for market reasons, but because of their commitment to soil preservation. "For me, it's not about nutrition," said Bourne. "It's about preserving the fertility of the soils."

Bourne is imperiled by the new study and remains passionate about keeping farms up to standard. "Organic standards are slipping. As it is, there's more and more stuff you can eat," he said. "Eventually, we'll need a tighter standard."

That same day Rachel Nevitt of Stouffville's **Full Moon Farm** greeted her CSA customers as they arrived to pick up boxes of onions, beets, cauliflower, green peppers, broccoli, tomatoes, chard, GMO-free soybeans and, yes, potatoes.

Nevitt said she'd heard some buzz about the study, but noted, "Enough people who are good, critical thinkers know that the real question is not really health benefits of the food, per se. It's the health of the planet that is at stake."

Nevitt and her husband, David Zecherman, wander about the health aspect of carbon emissions from the transport of industrial-scale food. Why didn't the researchers take this into account? And her own critical mind questioned the Stanford project's

funding. "Was it Monsanto or some other large agribusiness that would benefit from the more negative coverage of organic farms?"

As it happened, the Cornucopia Institute, a Wisconsin advocacy group, sent out a press release later that day that addressed the funding of the research center where the organic study was conducted, Stanford's Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. One of its two major corporate sponsors was agribusiness giant Cargill. (The other was the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.)

That revelation didn't seem to surprise Vermonters Barry Embrook, author of 2009's *Resistant: How Modern Industrial Agriculture Destroyed Our Most Alluring Fruit*. He said in an email that researchers at Stanford "frequently produce studies with conclusions favorable to Big Ag."

"Remember," Embrook added, "the Stanford group did no actual nutritional analysis of its own. Rather, they based their conclusions on the results of previously published scientific papers, and they simply omitted many papers with results that ran contrary to the notion that organic and nonorganic foods were the same nutritionally."

All of this is heady, and confining, stuff to consider for anyone facing a decision at the produce counter. With the spoils of a multibillion-dollar organic industry at stake, the battle is sure to continue — at least in the media. Personally, however, I will never fancy *bacheldorphenyldehydroxyflavone* in my guava. ☺

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# Head of the Class

Grilling the Chef: Jean-Louis Gerin

BY ALICE LEVITT



**V**ermont may be home to the Most Interesting Man in the World, but we don't have a lot of legends. Now we have at least one: The New England Culinary Institute's new executive chef, Jean-Louis Gerin, has been lauded twice by the French government: *Chef national du Montérégie* and a *Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres*. He's also picked up a silver toque from the *Meilleurs Cuisiniers de France* and, state-

ment, where he and his son-in-law, Loris, will have a 12-year-old son at public high school. When he graduates this spring, Loris Gerin will join her husband in her native Vermont, where her father opened Newfane's celebrated *Four Seasons Inn*.

Jean-Louis Gerin, who is president of the U.S. chapter of *Association Culinare de France*, says he NCEC's most decorated chef yet, but he says he's not in any rush to make good changes to the school. "NCEC is a well-oiled machine that is running very smoothly," Gerin says. "We do things well in the ways — the concept. I'm doing things right here."

Part of that "glance" mission involves working closely with NCEC's dean of hospitality and restaurant management, Michelle Ford, to better connect its respective programs that prepare students to work in "front and back-of-house." The goal is to make front-of-house a legitimate part to the restaurant business," Gerin says. "The chef is always going to be more glamorous — they have the creativity and the big hat, but we are getting very close to a European standard where the knowledge and passion it takes to be [a manager or server] is becoming as respectable as being a chef. We just have to speed it up and make it a respected position."

Gerin, who already uses Vermont products in his Connecticut kitchens, particularly poultry, says he's excited to make more connections with local farms. Other plans for his first year in Vermont include hitting the slopes, working with

NCEC's pool of "fine talent" and eating across the state. Meet the latest chef to shape Vermont's culinary future.

## SEVEN DAYS: Name three foods that make life worth living

**JEAN-LOUIS GERIN:** Chicken. It has to be real chicken. When I moved to America, for the first five years, I didn't serve chicken in my restaurant. I served it after I received great feedback. Chicken is really an incredible food, and there is no end to your imagination in recipes.

Any kind of fish, and on the vegetable side, particularly I love root vegetables. You can turn it into anything you want, from sautéed and roasted to baked or braised.

This is what I really, really like, but of course if you offer me a spoon of cream, I won't turn it down.

## SD: Have you ever eaten something truly weird?

**JLG:** I'm not very adventurous, but I went to Guyana to see my little brother, who is running an organic banana-organic banana company. I had a sort of nigori, binging on an open fire.

Every time you sit down in it, they say, "Well, it's a long process" which means they roast it every day and keep reheating it. You are there. I'm doing you check your will and call your children to my good-bye.

## SD: You're a "Chopped" champion, what were your impressions of the show?

**JLG:** It's long 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. And TV, the way it works, they ask you the same question over and over. It's like a mother, you just keep saying, "Yes, Mom."

## SD: What's the last thing you ate?

**JLG:** I had the pleasure of dining [at NCEC on Main] last night with [past NCEC executive chef] Robert Baral and Michel Lefebvre. I had swordfish that was cooked to perfection. If you forget it a little bit, it just becomes dry. You can't fix it.

I'm so happy because that was the student's cooking. To arrive at that level where the swordfish is cooked [just] that it stays in the middle almost like milk, you see it's been taken care of. I said, "No! Our guys are doing it!"

## SD: Have you taken in love with any Vermont products?

**JLG:** I use Vermont products down to Connecticut. The last two things that I bought [at Hanger Mountain Co-op] were cheese.

When I don't want to be a snob, but the evolution of cheese from the '60s to now, the quality starts protected now in Vermont, it just isn't blowing.

## SD: If you could have any chef in the world prepare a meal for you, who would it be?

**JLG:** For fun, definitely Guy Savoy. To pick his brain, probably [joining] 19th- to 20th-century chef Auguste Escoffier. I use [The Complete Guide to

**Chef:** Jean-Louis Gerin  
**Age:** 55  
**Employer:** New England Culinary Institute  
**Location:** Montpelier  
**Cuisine type:** Updated nouvelle cuisine  
**Setting:** Educational/Therapeutic/Hotel  
**Themed:** Inn, Sports, France  
**Selected experience:** *Chopped* champion, *Restaurant Jean-Louis*, Greenwich, Conn. (2010-2012), chef de cuisine, *Restaurant Guy Savoy*, Greenwich, Conn. (2010-2012), chef de cuisine, *Restaurant Guy Savoy*, Paris (2000-2002)

side, a James Beard Award for Best Chef Northeast, as well as a win on the Food Network competition show "Chopped."

In January 3, Gerin, who has been in the States for nearly 30 years, will close his 28-year-old *Restaurant Jean-Louis* in Greenwich, Conn., and relocate. But for now, he's splitting his time between Montpelier and Connecticut's Gold

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the Art of Modern Cookery] as a bed-table book. The book is impressive, you can also use it as a booster for kids when they're small.

I love [pickled] characters. At some times I start thinking, what if?

If you want to not impress me, from something I will probably laugh at you it doesn't impress me. It doesn't bring anything.

**SD: What's the dish you'll be remembered for?**

JLG: Banquet Vermont quail stuffed with Escalifade chicken mousse. Every time I try to take it all my mind. I got people threatening me. That's for the main course.



**I DID AN ESCARGOT ICE CREAM WITH ESCARGOTS, PARSLEY, GARLIC AND MILK. I FROZE THAT AND PUT IT IN THE ICE CREAM. IT TASTED BAD.**

JEAN-LOUIS GUERIN, EXECUTIVE CHEF, NEW ENGLAND CULINARY INSTITUTE

The appetizer is American oyster salad, which I created when my wife was pregnant with our first son. She was craving oyster and it looked like we were going to go bankrupt. It's just lemon juice, capers and oysters in oyster cream with three loads of oyster, served out as oyster salad. Those are our two best sellers.

**SD: What's the worst dish you've ever created?**

JLG: When I just got my Pompidu [ice cream machine], I had a bunch of friends over for dinner and wanted to show off my creativity. I did an escargot ice cream

with escargots, parsley, garlic and milk. I froze that and put it in the ice cream. It tasted bad.

Fortunately they were friends of mine, so right away they said, "You have to stop that. It's really bad." If you continue like that, we're going to remove the Pompidu from you."

**SD: What's your favorite Vermont restaurant?**

JLG: Whenever we have time, we stop by at Cafe Providence. It's not a big chain. It's just an extra hour. It's a great spot, and [chef-owner Robert Durill] has a fantastic eye for his la Cite. We arrive in Vermont with an open mind and a big appetite.

[wines] and says, "Don't touch it, you're not going to like it."

**SD: What kind of music do you like to listen to in the kitchen?**

JLG: I stopped that because some members of my crew cannot focus. The kitchen is a creative place, but it's also a dangerous place. There are flames; there are knives; there are people around you.

When I'm prepping alone, I have a great mix of Mozart and Beethoven. In the new generation, I like that one little girl that has the small voice — Taylor Swift. She's just herself and doesn't try to be anything else.

**SD: How did your family eat when you were growing up? Do your kids cook?**

JLG: I'm from the [French] Alps, so anything that has to do with cheese — cheese fondue. I'm coming from a family where the man cooks as a hobby. My father was a Sunday cook. My mother had to deal with all of it from Monday to Saturday, completely ignored by her four children who were putting out lunch and dinner all the time. My father was making such a fuss on Sunday, it was, oh, that day.

My younger son is actually a good cook. He's trying to see how much bacon he can use in anything. I'm surprised he didn't create a bacon dessert yet.

[My older son] I think that he almost finished cooking at [Greenwich] High School. The teacher told him, "Generally you should be able to cook. Either you're not paying attention or something is wrong with you." I tell him to change his name.

**SD: Growing up, were there any foods you thought were gross?**

JLG: The same is now. The vegetable I really don't understand is eggplant. The one I carried with body-eyes is raw peppers. I don't like cucumbers when they aren't pickled. In Europe, you peel your cucumbers, so please get to it, America.

**SD: What's your most embarrassing favorite food?**

JLG: The little red triangle that you buy in the gas station... Doritos. If you open any glow compartment, there is probably a bag in there. And every chef eats pizza.

**SD: What do you think is the strangest thing about American food habits?**

JLG: The anchovy is all day. This is something that a Karpovian, it is kind of shocking, the constant anchovy on stuff, where there is no beginning and end. What are you eating now? I'm saying that when I'm dining with my Dorian, of course. ☺

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18 2014

# calendar

september 19-26, 2012

## WED.19

### art

**THE PAPER OWL** • Glass artists for all disciplines present numerous competitions. Artists can place their piece in five hours through Friday. A VIP awards ceremony follows at DeLo's on Saturday. The fair's daily hours: 9:30 a.m.-6 p.m. & 4-8 p.m. on Sat. to watch. Info: 855-8956.

### books

**IN GLOWS & TILDS** • 2-5 p.m. **Deborah Felt** leads and **Debra** reads her new book. She'll share the shelves at a bazaar benefit for library collections and services. Balfour Free Library, 4-6 p.m. Free. Info: 773-9862.

### business

**MR. & MRS. ELLING** • Marketing advertising professionals are still needed and design credits will be awarded. Ideal for local nonprofits and nonprofits. Nonprofits seeking help apply online. Hours: 2-5 p.m. **Elling** at Chicago College Building, 115 E. Erie St. Free. Info: 848-5445.

### children

**WORKSHOPS** • 10-11 a.m. **Elling** leads and **Debra** reads her new book. She'll share the shelves at a bazaar benefit for library collections and services. Balfour Free Library, 4-6 p.m. Free. Info: 773-9862.

### comedy

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

### community

**CARHUS** • 7-8 p.m. **Debra** reads her new book. She'll share the shelves at a bazaar benefit for library collections and services. Balfour Free Library, 4-6 p.m. Free. Info: 773-9862.

### education

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

### entertainment

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

### events

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

### food

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

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### fitness

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

### health

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

### history

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

### music

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

### performing arts

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

### science

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

### social

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

### sports

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

### theater

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

### travel

**OFFER** • 8-9 p.m. Fun-loving participants play "What's in It for Me?" style games in an ever-changing environment. **Spunk Arts**, Burlington, 8:00 p.m. \$1 suggested donation. Info: 333-4733.

## SEPT. 21 & 22 | DANCE

### There's Something About Mary

What does the latest African actress and singer **Miriam Makeba** have in common with the **Virgin Mary**? More than a variation of the same name, certainly. In the eyes of choreographer and dancer **Nora Chipewanie**, both illustrate the weight of womanhood in a man's world. Chipewanie pays subtle tribute to both icons as Miriam, a partly anthropological dance-theater work. The imagery of glowing halos and black shadows on the face for this intelligence meditation on self-discovery, struggle and spiritual triumph locked by spoken text, violation and an original score by Grammy nominee **Osamu Sato**.

### more art

Friday, September 21 and Saturday, September 22, 8 p.m. at **Off Centre** in Burlington. Info: 855-8956. [www.offcentre.org](http://www.offcentre.org)

## SEPT. 21 & 22 | TALKS

### Golden Girl

When the women's Olympic gymnastics team won gold in London this summer, commentators couldn't help but war against what the last American team to take home an American flag's triumph was made in an injured world and **Shannon Miller** rocketing into the ranks as America's most decorated gymnast—even today. In the "Magnificent 7" team of 1996 rightly retains its legendary status. With two gold, two silver and three bronze medals to her name, Miller later succeeded a bigger challenge overseas: money. Now a survivor, she swings through theater to discuss her journey, just in time for National Olympians Day.

### Shannon Miller

Friday, September 21, 7-9 p.m. at **Off Centre** in Burlington. Info: 855-8956. [www.offcentre.org](http://www.offcentre.org)

### Shannon Miller

Saturday, September 22, 10-11 a.m. at **Grass Mountain Symposium** in Whitehall. Info: 855-8956. [www.offcentre.org](http://www.offcentre.org)



Shannon Miller, a former Olympic gymnast, will discuss her journey in theater at Off Centre in Burlington. Photo: Shannon Miller

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# pugs, Not Drugs

SEPT. 22 | ETC.

**E**very dog has its day: for pugs, it's this Saturday at the Green Mountain Pug Rescue's 10th annual pug social. Pups and their people shake a tail feather—or just a tail—at this fundraiser for the volunteer-run non-profit, which supports pugs in need and helps find them a permanent home. Competitive canines can face off in contests for curliest tail, longest tongue, best wrinkles or cleverest costume—and rescued dogs prance around in pug races and an alumni parade. Whatever you do, it's probably best to hit up the pug Cafe for hot dogs and libbas before the "crap raffle drawing." Woof.

## Gr EEN mounTAIN PuG REScue on E PUG Social

Saturday, September 22, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at a historic memorial library in Burlington  
 (502) 470-0040; 603-884-0000; [greenmtpugrescue.com](http://greenmtpugrescue.com)



PHOTO COURTESY OF GREEN MOUNTAIN PUG RESCUE

SEPT. 22-30 | THEATER

## Puppet Love

If the only puppet you're familiar with is roamed Pinocchio, there's your cue to head south for Burlington Theater's Puppets in the Green Mountains Festival. The one-day festival brings world-class puppetry and "unusual theater" to venues ranging from an apple orchard to an opera house. The cast-ups dress as just as varied: *Garbage Monster*, by Berkeley's Corgie Onk Shadow Theatre, is a kid-friendly sci-fi comedy about trash disposal, while *Midnight Puppet Theater's Black Birds of Italyville* is a provocative look at Poland's anti-Semitic history. *Paper Cat*, by Israeli's Yael Eshkol, is a romance that morphs into a Hitchcockian nightmare. And you thought puppets were child's play.

## PUPPETS IN THE GREEN MOUNTAINS

Saturday, September 22, through Sunday, September 30, at various venues and locations in southern Vermont. 50-60 per performance. info: 802-435-7350; [puppetsinthegreenmountains.com](http://puppetsinthegreenmountains.com)



PHOTO BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS

WAMPY PUG: MICHAEL BAKER

SEPT. 22-30: JEFFREY M. HARRIS

BLACK BIRDS: JEFFREY M. HARRIS

GREEN MOUNTAINS: JEFFREY M. HARRIS

# calendar

PRIDE 10-12-13

## food & drink

**BAIRE FARMERS MARKET** Crafters, bakers and brewers share their goods in the center of the town. Same Gate Hall Plaza. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: [bairfarmersmarket@gmail.com](mailto:bairfarmersmarket@gmail.com)

**CHAMPLAIN ISLAND FARMERS MARKET** Baked bread, preserves, meat and eggs, custom chocolate, scratch food goods. 52. Shore of Lake Champlain South Side. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-3220

**COLCHESTER FARMERS MARKET** (Sundays) open and friendly with local produce, generally low prices. 400 North Pleasant St. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

**FARMING MARKET WELLNESS TABLE** Eat, market! Rocco Vento's chef Amy Olson whips up snacks that collide the green superfood. 400 North Pleasant St. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

**MIDDLEBURY FARMERS MARKET** Crafts, cheeses, breads and eggs in one place in downtown Middlebury. 400 North Pleasant St. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

**NEWPORT FARMERS MARKET** Bakes, meats, eggs, dairy, vegetables, herbs and baked goods in a small setting in the historic hall, located in the center of downtown. 348 Commerce Street. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

**WILTON FARMERS MARKET** Shoppers can enjoy local food and handmade products at a weekly open-air stall. Town Green, Wilton. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

## health & fitness

**WOMEN ARE BETTER ETHICAL DECISIONS IN THE USE OF HEALTH CARE RESOURCES** Medical ethics is a subject that's been a hot topic in the news lately. But what if you could be a part of the solution? Join the Women's Health Ethics Committee. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

## kids

**ART TIME PLAYGROUP** Creating toys and other projects to use for playtime and sharing. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

**MOOSEHOLE PLAYGROUP** Children and their adult caregivers connect themselves in ongoing activities and more. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

**FAIRFIELD PLAYGROUP** Parents and children connect themselves in ongoing activities and more. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

**KIDGATE STORY HOUR** Songs and rhymes for the youngest. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

**MOVING & GROWING WITH OUTSIDE** Two- to 5-year-olds play in the sand and water. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

**MUSIC WITH MOOSEHOLE** Big kids meet their peers in a group and build on their skills. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

**ST. ALBANS PLAYGROUP** Creative activities and storytelling engage young minds. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

**STORY TIME & PLAYGROUP** Read-aloud stories and play for the youngest. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

**STORY TIME WITH BULL AND CATS OUTSIDE** Crafts, songs and rhymes and tell stories around tables. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

— and possibly lack. [www.publiclibrary-wilmington.com](http://www.publiclibrary-wilmington.com)

## history

**3000 CIRCLE** Community members share in a story along the historic and rural. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

## music

**WILSON BUTTERFLY THEATRE** In 1923, a black and white 10-year-old boy of the island center was rescued in Mexico. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

**WAGON RIDGE WEDNESDAY** Riders bring in their horses and enjoy the view. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

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# Pride Vermont Festival

## • wed.19

### PRIDE WOMEN

#### PLAY MUSIC:

Viva and Her Power Trio, Antares, Liana, Alex Lyons, and Dots E. and Zee! play everything from acoustic to rock tunes at a two-year year plan. Red Square, Burlington. 5-6 p.m. Free

## • thu.20

### 800 GAY DRINK RUIZ

#### COFFEEHOUSE:

Antares Gaidh's a special pride-themed open mic night. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

## • fri.21

### POP-UP QUEER RUIZ

#### QUEER PARTY:

10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

### VGSA PRIDE CRUISE:

Rails set sail for three hours of dancing, food and fun. After party at Red Square. Lake Champlain Ferry. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

## • sat.22

### SEAR TEA: A BENEFIT FOR PRIDE VERMONT:

Craig Mitchell, Barb Douglas and Alex Perry. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

### FARM FRESH:

The PRIDE PARTY: Customers are encouraged at the state's largest pride party hosted by Gory Acorn and John Quince. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

Higher Ground Railroad. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

## NOWH CAMPAIGN

### OPEN PHOTO SHOOT:

Falls 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

## NORTHERN OCCASION:

Inconjunction with the Pride Vermont Festival, also sample the region's best specialty foods. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

## PRIDE VERMONT

### PARADE & FESTIVAL:

Performers, marchers and floats form a colorful procession from the Church Street Marketplace to Battery Park. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

## VERMONT DRAG KID:

Drag queens compete for a special crown. Proceeds benefit 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

## • sun.23

### POST-PRIDE WOMEN'S TEA DANCE:

Ladies meet, mingle and if the mood strikes, dance at the 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

## PRIDE RECOVERY

### BRUNCH & DINNER:

Ten percent of food and drink sales at the 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

Higher Ground Railroad. 10-12-13. 9-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 332-5636

pridevermont 802-4966 - pridevt.org



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1/8/12 1:23 PM



THURSDAY

**Horseshoe Lake Festival** **10 a.m.** to 5 p.m. | Owners sell handcrafted items, herbs and food among traditional Irish baked goods. Free admission. Horseshoe Lake Festival, 4640 Church of the Holy Spirit, Horseshoe Lake, N.Y. 12526-0304 or 518-425-4251

**HomeMade Project** **10 a.m.** | Kids definitely make the grade in this well-attended art class. Mason jars and family glue. Free admission. A Little Bit of Art, 1000 Broadway, Laramie, Wyo. 82001. Registration: 7-120.00. 12-10: 10.00. 18+: 15.00

**Jazz For Everyone** **7 p.m.** | Presenting jazz trio featuring locally grown ragtime, stride, blues and more. Jazz For Everyone, 1000 Broadway, Laramie, Wyo. 82001. Registration: 7-120.00. 12-10: 10.00. 18+: 15.00

**New Year's Eve Party** **7 p.m.** | Celebrate the New Year with a night of dancing, singing and socializing. New Year's Eve Party, 1000 Broadway, Laramie, Wyo. 82001. Registration: 7-120.00. 12-10: 10.00. 18+: 15.00

**Rock On! Music Festival** **10 a.m.** | Celebrate the New Year with a night of dancing, singing and socializing. Rock On! Music Festival, 1000 Broadway, Laramie, Wyo. 82001. Registration: 7-120.00. 12-10: 10.00. 18+: 15.00

**Winter Jazz Festival** **10 a.m.** | Celebrate the New Year with a night of dancing, singing and socializing. Winter Jazz Festival, 1000 Broadway, Laramie, Wyo. 82001. Registration: 7-120.00. 12-10: 10.00. 18+: 15.00

## PARENTS PICK

## Camping Continues...

It's not too late to sleep out under the stars. In fact, there are some big advantages to late-season tenting, says Christine Skinner at the Western State Parks. It's not overcrowded, for example, and most of the bugs are gone. Plus, campsites will have plenty of visitors at the two desert camps open through Columbus Day weekend. Designed to break down barriers for first-timers, the camping class, **LEARN MORE ABOUT CAMPING**, sponsored by Eastern Mountain Sports and the Western State Parks offers some practical advice. It starts with a gear clinic and ends with an expert-led Q&A over campsite-related transformations. In between, families play tag on a nature setup and camp cooking, as well as learn for kid-centered outdoor activities.



**LEARN MORE ABOUT CAMPING** **Saturday, September 20, 10 a.m.** to 1 p.m. | State Park, Cherokee, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free. No pre-registration or drop-in fee required; attendees check in with park staff at the gate for free admission. Info: 248-3700. Visit [stateparks.com](http://stateparks.com)

**Have you seen our new mobile site at [kidsvt.com?](http://kidsvt.com?)**

Easily browse and get info on nearby events!

**kids**

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## children

**Gifts from P** | Make and enjoy your own gifts. Gifts from P, 1000 Broadway, Laramie, Wyo. 82001. Registration: 7-120.00. 12-10: 10.00. 18+: 15.00

## health &amp; fitness

**Fitness For Life** **10 a.m.** | Fitness For Life, 1000 Broadway, Laramie, Wyo. 82001. Registration: 7-120.00. 12-10: 10.00. 18+: 15.00

## hills

**Mountain Music** **10 a.m.** | Mountain Music, 1000 Broadway, Laramie, Wyo. 82001. Registration: 7-120.00. 12-10: 10.00. 18+: 15.00

**Rock On! Music Festival** **10 a.m.** | Celebrate the New Year with a night of dancing, singing and socializing. Rock On! Music Festival, 1000 Broadway, Laramie, Wyo. 82001. Registration: 7-120.00. 12-10: 10.00. 18+: 15.00

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## Fri. 21

## artisans

## Lynette Hengle

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PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS

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# It's time to buy a house!

*We can help you put the pieces together.*



## MEET THE EXPERTS:



ANDREW G. MIKELL, ESQ.  
STATE MANAGER



JULIE LAMOREAUX  
REALTOR



## THE MORTGAGE TEAM FROM:



TIM DONLAN  
JEANNE BOUCHER



*Vermont Attorneys  
Title Corporation* PRESENTS A

# Home <sup>FREE</sup> Buying Seminar

hosted by **SEVEN DAYS**

.....  
Thursday, October 11, 6-8 p.m.  
ECHO LAKE AQUARIUM & SCIENCE CENTER  
.....

5:30 Check-In  
LIGHT DINNER PROVIDED  
.....

RSVP by:  
NOON, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11  
AT [SEVENDAYSVT.COM](http://SEVENDAYSVT.COM) OR 865-1020 X 36



# It's The Point World Tour!

## Starting Monday, September 24<sup>th</sup>

listen for YOUR chance to win a trip to

# The Austin City Limits Festival

starring The Red Hot Chili Peppers,  
Neil Young & Crazy Horse,  
The Black Keys, Jack White,  
Florence + the Machine, The Shins,  
Weezer, Gotye (& Kimbra),  
The Dunwells, and a kajillion more!

For all the  
details,  
just  
tune in!

**The Point**  
Independent Radio

104.7 and 93.3 in Burlington  
104.7 and 100.3 in Montpelier  
95.7 in the Northeast Kingdom  
103.1 & 107.7 in The Upper Valley

## calendar

SAT 10:00 PM

**NEPES LOW-CUT DENIM** MCOUTHERKINER  
Local and regional bands play hardcore  
punk, enclosed in a 1973  
Sally's Plaidhouse 6/7 p.m. \$10. Info:  
202-224-5573

**PEACE CONCERT** Harmony leaders mark the  
International Day of Peace and its local roots. All  
are community choir members. Bring a chair  
and a candle. Sun. 10:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.  
Vermont Statehouse House, Montpelier 9:00 p.m.  
Free. Info: 235-0202

**SING FOR PEACE** Members of all area churches  
and Congregational Church will sing around  
candlelight. Singers for all ages. For more  
info: Congregational Church, Rutland 4 p.m.  
Donations accepted. Info: 242-1184

**THE AIRPLATES** Jimmy Herlihy, Mike Finn  
Dunn, Heather Housh, Heidi Segal and Jan  
Wells play original folk rock, funk, blues and  
reggae at the school's homecoming and student  
weekend. South Green 10:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.  
Canaan Center for the Arts, Johnson State College 9:30  
a.m. Free. Info: 635-1251

**THE STEPHENSON EXPERIENCE** A veteran  
local rock band plays live at the Canby. Your  
local rock band. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.  
Canby, 10:00 p.m. Free. Info: 635-1251

**THE TWO PRINCE BAND** Born and raised in  
Newport, the singer-songwriter and keyboard  
duo has been playing live for over 10 years.  
10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.  
10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.  
10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.

**WYMANVILLE FEATURING ADAM ROCKY**  
10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.  
10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.  
10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.

**WORMHOLE IS WHERE IT'S AT** The 10:00 p.m.  
and 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.  
10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.

**WORMHOLE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA** 10:00 p.m.  
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10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.

The surrounding middle school. Five Free 10:00  
10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.

10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.

**INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL VIDEO EDITING**  
Free! Don't miss out on this chance to learn the  
basics of video editing. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.  
10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.

**LEARN A HART ABOUT CAMPING** A weekend  
workshop on how to set up a tent, make a fire,  
and more. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.

**ONE-ON-ONE COMPUTER TUTORIALS** Learn  
computer software and hardware. 10:00 p.m.  
10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.

**OPEN-HOUSE WORKSHOP** Professional and  
amateur photographers. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.  
10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.

**OPEN-HOUSE WORKSHOP** Professional and  
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**OPEN-HOUSE WORKSHOP** Professional and  
amateur photographers. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.  
10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.







## WED. 26

## community

DINING NIGHT See WED 18 &amp; 19 p.m.

## community

CIRC ALTERNATIVE TALK PRIZE MEETING

The CMAA online Court Regional Planning Commission Recognition Planning Organization holds a public meeting to address transportation, safety, livability, and economic development in the region. Free (self-william) 5-7 p.m. Free info: 844-444-4444 ext. 15. [cmaaonline.org/online](http://cmaaonline.org/online)

OPEN HOUSE MEETING See WED 18 &amp; 19 p.m.

**TROPICAL STORM PRIZE SUPPORT GROUP** Meet and discuss all relevant information. Road trip. Share their stories and learn coping skills. Boston Elementary School. 3:30 p.m. Free info: 258-4542

## events

MAKE STUFF See WED 18 &amp; 19 p.m.

## film &amp; tv festivals

KALAMITY TOWN FESTIVAL See WED 18 &amp; 19 p.m.

## film

AT THE HOUSE: NEER DORR See WED 18 10:30 p.m.

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AT THE HOUSE: NEER DORR See WED 18 10:30 p.m.

AT THE HOUSE: NEER DORR See WED 18 10:30 p.m.

company of adult caregivers. Montpelier by Town Library. 3:30-4:30 p.m. Free info: 327-5406

**MUSIC & MOVEMENT PLAYGROUP** Musicians and performers with all kinds of instruments. St. Albans Free Library. 10-11:45 a.m. Free info: 527-5426

**MAKING WITH A CHILD** See WED 18 10-11 a.m.

**ST. ALBANS PLAYGROUP** See WED 18 10-11 a.m.

**ST. ALBANS PLAYGROUP** See WED 18 10-11 a.m.

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1. **Identify the main idea**  
 2. **Identify the supporting details**  
 3. **Identify the conclusion**

[illegible]

# Going With the Flow

Reuben Jackson is the new voice of jazz on Vermont airwaves

BY DAN ROLLER

**R**euben Jackson is almost perfectly shy. As a photographer from seven days if cross around him snapping pics from inconspicuously unpredictable angles, he smiles and nods politely, clanking a hollow-core cap of coffee or He's uncomfortable as the photo mags him into diff'ent light, trying to coax a less nervous pose.

Jackson is clearly at ease as the center of attention, but put him behind the microphone as a radio host, and that shuffling water blooms. His thoughtful-but-hesitant speech pattern becomes smooth and easy, his words given weight by his rich, resonant voice. His cadence, though calm and almost hypnotically lithe, is self-assured and authoritative, especially when he's riffing on his favorite subject: music.

Jackson, 36, is the new host of Vermont Public Radio's "Friday Night Jazz" program. He succeeds a man who was a vital institution for local jazz all cocaine: George Thomas, who hosted "Jazz with George Thomas" on VPR for the past 11 years before retiring this summer.

"I kind of feel like Larry Holmes after Michael Al stepped down," says Jackson of taking over for Thomas. "Who's the heavyweight champion?"

Here's joking—mostly. And for what it's worth, Jackson could do worse than to emulate Holmes (metaphorically speaking, who is regarded as one of today's all-time greats).

"George is my hero," he confesses, his words studded with genuine ad-verbs. Jackson admits to coming in as Thomas' program regularly over the years from his home in Washington, D.C., where while worked up in bed. It's a habit he picked up as a kid, listening to late-night radio broadcasts both for the music and for what he calls the "special quality of a good late-night host."

"I always felt people the 6 to 8 p.m. I heard were musicians and disc jockeys,"

Jackson says. "That permeative picture was as beautiful and entrancing to me as the music."

He plays a relaxed radio jockey to a shepherds who guide the listener through the music and connects the historical, thematic, and emotional dots. Thomas, he says, was a master.

"Just like a musician having kids build smaller, I have programmers I admire, either because of their knowledge, or delivery, or both," says Jackson. "George is one of those people."

The admission is mutual.

"He has a great voice and a great delivery," says Thomas. "And he knows his music."

That's an understatement.

Before moving to Vermont in 2011 to take a job teaching English at Burlington High School, Jackson served as the curator of the Duke Ellington Collection at the Smithsonian Museum for 20 years. He is also an accomplished music critic, having written for a number of prestigious publications, including *Washington City Paper* and the *Washington Post*, as well as *American Jazz* and *All About Jazz*. His reviews have also been featured on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered."

Jackson was born in Georgia and moved to Washington, D.C., as a child with his family in 1959. He says he started his musical education underground, literally. "I heard everything from Earl Scruggs to [jazz violinist] Niccolò Paganini in my parents' basement," he says.

Jackson's father was a versatile jazz fan who would often invite friends to the family basement to listen to records. Jackson recalls sitting at the top of the basement steps and oversteering. But it wasn't just the fascinating noise drifting from the hi-fi that captured his attention. "I was intrigued by the names," he says.

"Thelonious Monk, Miles Davis—they were musical in and of themselves. They



Reuben Jackson

didn't sound like Chubby Checker."

Neither did the music.

"I would hear this record," Jackson says. "I was entranced."

"Under penalty of death," he began creating his dad's jazz records from their basement but those early childhood listens led him on a path that Jackson has followed ever since.

"I've been chasing music most of my life," he says. "It's been a constant pursuit of that beauty and possibility."

Jackson graduated from Goddard College in 1999. The small liberal arts school is where he got his start in radio, doing as the then 18-year-old college student WJLB. But Jackson studied writing, not music, at Goddard. He's an accomplished poet, which is a skill that Thomas says sets Jackson apart as a jazz scholar and DJ.

"He thinks like a poet," notes Thomas, who first met Jackson through a shared love of poetry. He adds that the awe he's poetic intellect and gentle demeanor earned Jackson a broad appeal, uniting the often-splintered genre of jazz has struggled to achieve.

"Things happen on several levels, simultaneously," says Thomas of his successor on air. "To someone who is new to the music can enjoy it because the music is really good while someone who is into jazz can appreciate his selections because of how diverse, how intelligent and how true to his heart they are."

Ultimately, Jackson hopes to use his new hours to challenge listeners, getting them to think beyond stereo labels and confined definitions and see jazz as part of the larger, always-evolving musical whole.

"What I want to expose people to is that the art form is not relegated to a certain time period," says Jackson, who generally has little use for the term "jazz" itself. (He quotes Ornette Coleman: "Rock, classical, folk and jazz are all yesterday's titles.")

The Winlocks River doesn't stop in poetic cliché. Jackson concludes, off-cring a poetic metaphor: "It keeps going." ☺

**Friday Night Jazz** airs on Vermont Public Radio every Friday from 8 to 11 p.m.

# SOUNDbites

BY DAN BULLS

## Composing Hallelujah

Over watch the "The Voice" on NBC? The writer just thinks I may be tuning in over the cooking week, even though watching my standing role against watching reality television — well, from "Top Chef" of course. And that's only because one day I will marry Polina Lokshen and live not my days cooking for her and not 14 absurdly beautiful children. Amen.

Anyway, in case you hadn't heard — which likely means you're not on Facebook or have been in a coma for the past week — **DAVID NELSON**, of the uber-cool bar blues and roots duo **DAVID & NICKIE**, is taking it on the major-network talent show.

For the unfamiliar, "The Voice" is basically the *Peacock's* answer to Fox's *American Idol*, which was America's answer to England's "Pop Idol," which was England's answer to **ED MCGAGHAN's** "Star Search," which was the evolutionary cousin of the "sing show" which... well, you get the idea. It's a talent show. It involves voices. And celebrities.

The format on "The Voice" differs from that of "Idol" in large part because there's no jury/celebrity pay in a V-neck shopping spree. Instead, the judging panel consists of **DAVID NELSON** doing bluesy/punkier Cee-Lo Green things, bluesman country son **BLAKE SHREVE** being homesick, **MARION V. ADAM LEVINE** and his tattoos, and **CHRISTINA AGUILERA's** cleavage.

But the primary difference is in the varying stages of competition. The first is a blind aud in which the first judges to click away from the stage and can only give guidance based on what they hear — the voice, god it — which is actually a pretty awesome twist. The judges are evaluating talent to put together a team of singers, which they will coach through the remaining rounds. When judges hear something they like, they hit a button, which spins their chair around and makes they hear that singer on their squad. If more than one judge wants a particular contestant, the contestant chooses which team to join. Ya dig?

Nelson, doing a soulful version of



**LEVIATHAN (C) 2010** "Hallelujah" was a unanimous choice, as all four judges requested her vocal services. Levine (and his tattoos) was first to click in. The other three voted next and she hit a spine-tingling, **OFF HOOK!**—ah, high note at the song's apex before dropping her baritone. Having never seen the show previously, I have no idea if a unanimous decision is common, though I suspect not. In any case, it's a good sign, right?

So what does it mean? Nelson, who chose Levine as her coach — and gets Mary J. Blige as a mentor — advances to the battle round, in which she and one of her teammates will square off head to head, singing the same song. Then, as the first of the live battles, contestants from each team duke it out, with house audiences voting for a winner. There are several battles in the rounds beyond that, but should Nelson win it all, she'll get a big bag of cash as well as a record deal with Universal.

I caught up with Nelson by phone over the weekend, and she was, unsurprisingly, overwhelmed by the national attention since her episode aired last week. Other version of "Hallelujah" has been well within the top 100 on iTunes since.)

Nelson said she was usually leery of competing on a reality show but that the format on "The Voice" was appealing. "I felt this show was different," she said. "It's a tremendous opportunity to share music and every emotion in my heart with the entire world! The fact that connection is something that is so often missing when music goes too simplified or polished up to me I thought, it's time to put your money where your mouth is, baby girl!"

Nelson is home in Vermont, currently enjoying some downtime while the rest of the first-round auditions play out. But she'll be back on the national stage soon competing in the battle round in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, you can catch her next next Wednesday, September 16 at 10, when she sits in at her partner **DAVID NELSON's** ongoing residency at *Northern*. Nelson calls the weekly gig the "first thing she's had in a long time" (but to a single bar running down Oak-Lott check). And I don't doubt it. While you might not see Twitter on "The Voice" or "Idol" anytime soon, there is a tremendous vocalist and guitarist in her own right. Together, the two are enough the first — and potentially underappreciated — acts currently calling Vermont home. In other words, David & Nicole can open my barbed anytime.

## BiteTorrent

In a related story, you probably didn't know this — mostly because I'm writing it up — but back in the 1980s, rock-rockers **LEGION** were first to coin "Star Search." The band obviously lost to teen pop idol Turner. Well, technically they were disqualified for allegedly having dated their manager (leading to a post-hoc Ed McMahon that has no business being associated in a family newspaper. But still, of the two musical acts, only one has since posed for *Playboy*, so there's that. Anyway

SOUNDBITES BY DFB

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HAIR: JESSICA B. HARRIS

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# SOUNDbites

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 71

the boys are back in town: far rougher than their 12th-hour reunion gig. They'll be at Monks this Friday, September 21. And they'll be at the drink tank on the corner of Pearl and North Winooski early on Saturday, September 22.

I'm hesitant to mention anything about local comedy since hearing that any comic coming up more than a few times during the recent farewell coast of **WARRIORS** — I'm sure only nice things were said, right? Still, I really got a kick out of writing about the burgeoning local comedy scene — and I hope you do reading about it. Until now, though, the bulk of my comedic reporting has been centered on standup comedy, the most visible form locally. But

rationally, standup's unpredictable cousin, improv, has been exploding in popularity. For that we can likely thank comedians such as **STEPHEN COLBERT**, **PAUL FENNEL**, and **TIM LEE**, who started out in troupe-like Second City or Improv Olympics. Anyway, Burlington, always charmingly behind on cultural trends, just might catch up this Saturday, September 22, when the **SPACE IMPROV TROUPE** from **SPARK** goes down as quarterly improvisational-comedy series at Club Metronome. The show will feature a crew from Ingevinstitution, who will teach a workshop at the Spark Arts studio earlier that day. If you're unfamiliar with improv, the closest point of reference would be the TV



Stephen Colbert

show "Whose Line Is It Anyway?" The art form has myriad other styles, but that's the closest approximation to what you can expect at Metronome. If you like what you see and maybe want to try it yourself, you can always drop in on the improv sessions at Spark every Wednesday.

Last but not least, a little bit of theater/musical company shilling. As you may have seen, our annual — award-winning! — college guide, *What's Good*, hit the streets recently. In celebration, we're throwing a bit of party and serving several of our closest friend DJ sets. The *Musicology* showcase this Friday, September 21, at Club

Metronome features 10 of the area's finest DJs. They represent styles from across the increasingly varied EDM landscape, from dubstep to moombahton to trap to whatever new direction was just invented while I was writing this sentence. We'll have one from several of NYC's best known DJ crews, including **HIGHPOINT**, **AN ORB**, and **ROCKAWAY**. Also of note, DJ Lix will drop by, both spinning and pathing the second season of her excellent interview podcast, *Your Date: The First Episode*, featuring under-pag-dia Matt & Ben. Drops Wednesday, September 20. Check it out at [Nbtv.com](http://Nbtv.com).



Burlington NJ

-HEATHER B. FLEMMING



## Listening In

Dear again: This week's totally self-indulgent cultural assignment, in which I share a complete sampling of what was on my iPod, suitable CD player might track player etc., this week:

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# REVIEW *this*

## Rue Mevlana, *Synthetic Emotion*

(SELF-RELEASED TO DIGITAL DOWNLOAD)

Among the myriad genres, subgenres, and sub-subgenres that make up the Greater Vermont music scene, there is relatively underrepresented, particularly the glitchy, electro-pop variety. But there's not to say the Great Mevlanas are completely devoid of thinking, beat-centric fishbowlness. Rue Mevlana, a self-described songwriter led by songwriter and front man Nathan Jarvis, have been keeping away Burlington audiences away and sold since 2008. Starting this summer, the band released its latest album, *Synthetic Emotion*. The effort comes on the heels of a deliciously devious holiday EP, *Dancing to Keep Warm*, released late last year, and marks the band's fourth full-length album.

Taken as a whole, the record's 14 tracks represent a hypnotic 52-minute dose. Jarvis' production is generally informed by house and techno, with



just enough occasional breakfast snap to yank the listener out of a trance. That's not to say Rue Mevlana's tracks are dull. They aren't. Rather, these cuts yearn to be listened from the bass-fortified speakers of a dance club. This is dance music, first and foremost. And the tenderness to the many melodies of your ears will make for an undervalued experience, at least to the casual listener; but there is good reason to listen closely.

The crux of the Rue crew's appeal, and from these frenetic dance tunes, is its subversive nature. That quality

was made explicit on the band's aforementioned Xmas song, but it's subtler on *Synthetic Emotion*. Jarvis and his bandmates, Maryn Vilfajaz, Justine Crosby, Jon Maitell and Hannah Well, specialize in cheeky, precocious songwriting delivered with a gleefully shameless beat made that reminds this critic of a more heavily clubish version of 3's effington indie-pop band the Neutrons — whose music is far less cute and cuddly than you think, by the way. Imagine a strong, cat Clary ruffling on douche-yodels ("Swearing Celebrity") or a prickly Dena Kapke taking Marnett to task ("I'm Cruiser"), and you're in the ballpark.

*Synthetic Emotion* is Rue Mevlana's most complete effort to date. Though it likely doesn't do their notoriously scholastic live act justice, it's an all-outstanding album that serves as a worthy introduction to plan people Vermont.

Rue Mevlana play Farm Fresh, the Fringe Party at the Higher Ground Ballroom on Sunday, September 22.

DAH BOLLER

## Soulstice, *Soulstice*

(SELF-RELEASED TO DIGITAL DOWNLOAD)

Why, oh why, is there so much terrible music in the world? Perhaps it's because the genre is misnamed — incorrectly — too easy to play like hard core. It's not to play on the upbeat, right? Or maybe it's got something to do with the prevailing drug culture surrounding the genre. (A great idea seemed to usually half-baked sober) as fearless, like skilled music holds as responsibly on aggressive volumes of toxic or quality. But for some reason, it seems to fall victim to frustrating effects emerging in soul or ingenuity, time and time again. And it needs to stop.

All of which brings us to the newest member of Vermont's reggae community: Soulstice. On its self-titled debut EP, the Warren-based quintet offers 10 minutes of ideal grooves that demonstrate newly every crime against reggae perpetrated in the last 50 years.



Disparagion proclamations of faith in job and/or fast-forwarded Check, obligatory ode(s) to getting high. Check. Overman fusion with guest-by-numbers jam and funk groove. Check and check.

If predictable, this stuff is merely mildly frustrating. But what really irks about the EP is that Soulstice are better than that. Aside from the obvious shifts in tempo and synopses, what made reggae different from its comparatively cheap indie predecessors — do and

reliantly — is that it introduced a subtly complex style. Soulstice seem to understand this. Their opening cut, "For the World," is richly arranged and textured. So, too, are tracks such as "Gotta Be Good" and "Seven Time" — both expertly layered, and when reggae feels faded out with monotony and understated accents.

So why the reluctance on every long lyrical cliché in the book when Soulstice have the natural sense and creativity to do better? I don't know, get it.

Reggae is soul music. It's, pardon the chestnut, the music of the people, born of social and political protest. (Look it up, kiddies.) Yet what Soulstice offer is the same pseudo-happy bubble that has surely moved Bob Marley to open his grave for decades — or, at the very least, made for this brilliant yet mildly tiring 2005 Ocean headline "Bob Marley Xmas From Ghetto to First First Boys From Bambi of Oppression."

Sigh

DAH BOLLER

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## northern

**REE & RINGS** Live: 10 p.m.-12 p.m.  
**ROCKHOUSE** Live: 10 p.m.-12 p.m.  
**THE BURNING** Live: 10 p.m.-12 p.m.

## MON.24

## burlington area

**LO LO LO** Family: 10 p.m.-12 p.m.  
**THE BURNING** Live: 10 p.m.-12 p.m.  
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SALAZAR (L) ZAMMUTO (R) (C)

**Book Smarts** Zammuto is a new (ish) band led by Nick Zammuto, former front man of dearly departed Fullerton act the Roots. The quartet self-released, released earlier this year, set the blogosphere into a tizzy and elicited a response roughly summarized as "When." A densely glitchy effort, the record strikes a fine, if precarious, balance between accessible pop machinations and mysterious electronic experimentation. As part of a lengthy tour that includes dates with pop sensation Gaby, Zammuto stop by Sugar Kitchen in Burlington this Saturday, September 22, with local friends ERIN and RAINBOWS.

**OUR METROPHONE** (C) 10 p.m.-12 p.m.  
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## WED.26

## burlington area

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**This week:**  
**Matt Johnson**  
**of Matt & Kim**  
 Matt & Kim recorded the smash hit "Daylight" in Johnson's parents' basement in Jacksonville, VT.

**Season two**  
**fueled by:**



**ALL VT ARTISTS!**

**SPONSORED BY:**



**SEVEN DAYS AT**  
**SEVENDAYS.AT**  
 in Burlington, VT



# Forever Young

BY PAMELA POLSTON

**D**uty Boynton declares that when she first began painting, at age 53, what emerged on the paper "looked like it was done by a 6-year-old." Just a year later, in 1993, a *New York Times* review said she had "a childlike style that isn't childish." (It's noteworthy that Boynton so quickly had an exhibit to be reviewed, and favorably.) What's the difference between childlike and childish? A discerning viewer can pick up on the intelligence, wit and wisdom in Boynton's loosely drawn yet creative images and surreal fancies that you also could say she has, over her late-blooming career, totally nailed painting like a 5-year-old.

And you could imagine Picasso nodding with approval. "Every child is an artist," he famously said. "The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up." Boynton, it seems, has blissfully ignored that problem — along with the expectation that adults must make "mature" art. She is fully capable of doing "naïve" art like her realistic paintings in a recent catalog reveal. Instead, Boynton chooses to go at a black surface with curiosity, openness and a great deal of energy. She likes the expression "abandoned but not free." This from a woman whose parents are (and certainly) creative parents who looked sophisticated mistakes but learn from wood in exacting 112 proportions.

Over brunch at the Bee's Knees in Montpelier, Boynton insists that she doesn't like to talk about her work. In fact, she confesses, she hadn't really wanted to meet with a reporter; her dealer talked her into it. But Boynton's warm and generous nature was out and, flirty as hell, she reveals how she came to painting. She attributes those other words to increase that improved her "trust, trust, trust." Along with the Spanish master, a community-workshop art teacher Boynton encountered years ago inspired her to have faith in what she produced. "I follow my heart and my subconscious and let the painting go where it goes," she says.

Boynton is not the only artist to make that claim about her process. To be sure, the unfettered nature of her work is part of its appeal. But something else is at play here. Her paintings at first glance are naive, at second glance they are sophisticated. Unlike from the scribbled portraits, personae and strident energy



Protesters Before Town

**BOYNTON HAS, OVER HER LATE-BLOOMING CAREER, TOTALLY NAILED PAINTING LIKE A 5-YEAR-OLD.**



Ducky Boynton

The Hyde Park, Vt.-based artist, who will be 57 in December, exhibits and sells her work at Denise Baber Fine Art in Manchester, and for handmade items that the longtime former board member of the Vermont Indian Center recently had her adopted niece at the William Day Art Center in Stowe. That show presented about a dozen of Boynton's works — a selection curated by Rachel Morton — including large-scale paintings, special-edition prints and what Boynton calls "structured chaos."

These last are reminiscent of children's books in which the pages are divided horizontally in thirds, and the figures on them can be arranged in preposition, playful-inducing combinations. Boynton does just that with her reliefs. Blaring drums, heads, torsos and legs separately on paper and cut them out, she affixes random ones together in a process one imagines as just plain fun. — for example, in "Scorp," the head of a brown dog with cocked ears and rosy cheeks, the torso of a female with a cropped yellow shirt, holding an ice cream cone, and the crossed legs of an elephant wearing a mini-skirt.



For, yes, but gone are those mongrel figures for a while, and you can't help but ponder Boynton's intentions. Is there a statement here? Does it mean anything that a "child" with a flower-buckled hat, pearls and a neat ponytail has a huge, swan back, chicken legs and, most audaciously, bare breasts with bright-pink nipples? Boynton has busied her memories — from a childhood growing up on a farm in Amherst, Mass., a stint with her first husband in a "community of trees and bench beans," and raising three children with her second husband, Sam Boynton, in New Jersey — and unleashed them in her characters.

Boynton's gloriously expressive work does not stand out because it makes you look, wonder and look some more. Rather, it stands out precisely because it is so gloriously expressive. Untrained in the academic sense — that community workshop was her only art class — Boynton packs a lot into scribbled lines and daubed brushwork.

Many of her paintings are raw and crudely executed, a remarkable feat. Others are more carefully rendered, including a remarkable, fully-grown-at-style composition titled "Photoshoot." In the 36-by-72-inch oil on linen, a white cat on a dress with yellow polka-dots stares wide-eyed at the viewer, while an impressive brown, dog-like creature with discolored grips her possessively from their respective legs are a smaller brown dog and a black rooster. At the back, a large blue bird with a spiky beak looks away, peering in from the right is a small pink pig. You recognize traits in the "family."

With their area broad groins and raring grins, Ducky and Sam Boynton preside over a small menagerie in Hyde Park: an affectionate black cockapoo, a quently cut and two adorable dachshunds. There's more in exquisite and comfortable, filled with art and enigmas, cut back are lively grins and a rapturous mountain view that it's in her high-colored world, though it's a canvas, where Boynton is most at home. "It can't be put up in the morning," she says. "I'm forever grateful that you find a passion at 52 years old." ☺





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**Secondhand Art Auction For \$100** A one-price lot by the Top 20 National artists who answered a call to auction Facebook. Through September 30 at Crown Station in Burlington. Info: 855-8555

**What If?** Photographers Alex and Fred Cohen, Dennis de Winter and John Chaudhury interpret what it is like to be a child in 20 pictures. Through September 30 at the Kallio in Burlington. Info: 855-8558

**How Art Was** "Visual Media" is a platform exploration of mass media and the art of looking through graphic design and photography. Through September 30 at the Kallio in Burlington. Info: 855-8558

**Visual Media: A Single Eye** A 1971 reportorial on mass media, photography, the '60s and '70s and today's progress in eye care, as well as a 1971 film. Through September 30 at the Kallio in Burlington. Info: 855-8558

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## 'Turning Leaves'

Crack open Camille Durr's 1962 edition of *The Secret Garden* and you'll find more than Frances Hodgson Burnett's classic story. The Burlington artist has interspersed each of the novel's 284 pages with her own paintings and drawings on delicate rice paper. "Secret Garden" is just one of the many paintings, and diverse, works of book art on display as part of "Turning Leaves" at Randolph's Chandler Gallery, September 20 through November 10. Look for haunting assemblages by Lorraine Reynolds, illustrated manuscripts by Maryanne Grebenstein, and "Puck" (a picture), a clever assemblage of shells stuffed with crinkled book pages by Anna Gilman and Anne Reynolds.

**Long Point** Ben Giff and Jennifer Perryman's permanent art and exhibit. Through September 30 at the Kallio in Burlington. Info: 855-8558

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## Fall 2012 Lecture Series: War &amp; Peace Since 9/11

Jared Carter speaks on the  
**CONSTITUTION IN CRISIS**  
WED. / SEP. 24 / 7:00PM / MILLINGTON COLLEGE

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BURLINGTON, VT  
800.368.3838

DOI: 10.1002/anie.201507116

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**Trisha Brown Dance Company**

October 5, 8 P.M.

Flynn MainStage

**WIN TICKETS TO THIS SHOW  
AT SEVENDAYSVT.COM!**

DEADLINE TO ENTER 10/1 AT NOON  
WINNER CONTACTED BY 5 P.M.

**art**



**Susan Whelihan** As a self-described "Army brat," Susan Whelihan grew up all over the country, but one place felt like home: her great-grandmother's house in South Bedford, Vt., which she visited every year. Those visits are the reason that, after a successful graphic-design career in New York City and a period making art in New Jersey, Whelihan finally settled in Vermont's Upper Valley. Her broken-plate mosaics reflect her migration, using departing images of island life, others the covered bridges of the Green Mountain State. Her work is in a show called "Pieced Together" at Dartmouth's Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, N.H., September 30 through November 30. Pictured: "Covered Bridge."

CENTRAL VT SHOWS KIPFI

**champlain valley**

**ARTISTS OF THE FOREST** Jeanne Hunsicker, Accident ended on vinyl. From bark, cones, dog teeth, pine shavings, turn bare incense by 10. Evolved in a full-blown forest. Forest began through candles. 10 at Midbury Public Center in Midbury. Info: 802-495-4954.

**WILLOW LEAVES** Henriette's by Casey. Rainwater poetry by Susan Salkin and collage by Linda Gaudin. Through September 30th. Jackson Gallery, Town Hall Theatre in Middlebury. Info: 802-553-5132.

**CAMERA WORK: STYLISTS, STUCKIN, STRANG AND COMPANY** An artist by night, posing three generations of American photography. Julie Gungl, Edward Gungl and Paul Gungl—and featuring issues of Stargate's parenting journal, Camera Work, which was published between 1993 and 2003. Through October 30 at Midbury College Museum of Art. Info: 802-333-3333.

**CHINA MODERN: DESIGNING 20TH-CENTURY POPULAR CULTURE** A touring exhibit developed by London's Victoria and Albert Museum that explores the rich tradition of Chinese design in advertising, packaging and postcard art for classic music, movie, pulp-fiction, fashion, games and toys. Through December 1 at Middlebury College Museum of Art. Info: 802-443-3333.

**RAIN & HAZARD WAYS** Large-scale acrylic paintings by Bob, small-scale mixed-media paintings by Nancy. Through October 3 at Rutland Museum. Info: 802-402-4021.

**ENVIRONMENTAL/IMMUTATIVE INTERLUDE**

Large-scale eco-works—on canvas, silk, plastic, photo collage and found objects—in 10 new major pieces in 10th- and 11th-century, September 29 through October 3 at Johnson Memorial Building, Middlebury College. Info: 443-3360.

**FALL HOUSE** Christine Holmquist, Kelli D. Hays, Marissa Miller, Matt Stone and Chris Suprenant each tell a story in a room with a completed body of work. Through September 25 at Chaffee Art Center in Rutland. Info: 774-213-3136.

**JAMES FOWLER** "A trial of the dramatic" abstract paintings inspired by dreams. Every Saturday. Through November 3 at Rutland Gallery & Concept Room in Rutland. Info: 443-3360.

**LOVE PRESENTS** Oil paintings and ceramic sculptures depicting people who have made a difference in the student artist's life. Through September 30 at Johnson Memorial Building, Middlebury College. Info: 443-3360.

**LUZ HERRERA** "Sewing textures," acrylic paintings depicting ancient, dense images paired with the white rooms they represent. Through October 31 at Rutland Gallery & Concept Room. Info: 443-3360.

**ONE CHAIR** "Turning" bar stools and chairs into one-dimensional sculpture. Through September 30 at Carpenter-Concord Library in Rutland. Info: 443-2438.

**SCALP/THAT/TOE** An online exhibition of original illustrations by artists responding to the prehistoric animal language. Through October 21 at Carving Studio and Sculpture Garden in New Rutland. Info: 429-3337.

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# Palace 9

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**PAUL THOMAS ANDERSON'S  
THE MASTER**  
Starts 9/27

**MALCOLM COOPER CHAMPIONSHIP**  
Tuesday Oct. 2nd 7:30pm

## NEW IN THEATERS

**ART TRAP** (PG-13) A young girl is kidnapped by a man who finds it ironic to not want her to be intelligent like her father. Brad Pitt stars in this thriller. (PG-13) (R) (Palace)

**BRIDE** (PG) The mother of the bride is kidnapped by a man who finds it ironic to not want her to be intelligent like her father. Brad Pitt stars in this thriller. (PG-13) (R) (Palace)

**END OF WATER** (PG-13) A young girl is kidnapped by a man who finds it ironic to not want her to be intelligent like her father. Brad Pitt stars in this thriller. (PG-13) (R) (Palace)

**HOUSE AT THE END OF THE STREET** (PG-13) A young girl is kidnapped by a man who finds it ironic to not want her to be intelligent like her father. Brad Pitt stars in this thriller. (PG-13) (R) (Palace)

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## ratings

- ★ - refund please
- ★★ - excellent but not great
- ★★★ - just ok, mediocre
- ★★★★ - superior to the average
- ★★★★★ - as good as it gets

ALL RATES ASSIGNED TO MOVIES NOT RECEIVED BY PALACE 9. PALACE 9 IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY LOSS OF MOVIES. PALACE 9 IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY LOSS OF MOVIES. PALACE 9 IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY LOSS OF MOVIES.

## MOVIE CLIPS

## NOW PLAYING

**THE DARK KNIGHT TRILOGY** (PG-13) Batman takes on the Joker in this action-packed thriller. (PG-13) (R) (Palace)

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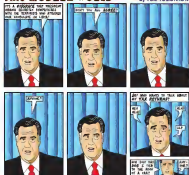


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## THIS MODERN WORLD

By TOM TOMORROW





## RED MEAT

ponderous march burden

from the second class of  
max cannon

Tiny Sepuku © 2012

DEAR TINY  
HOW DO I REPLY DATE MY BEST GUY  
FROM DE 500 AFTER LEAVING MY  
FOOT?

— Green Andy  
Seattle, WA



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more fun! straight dope (p. 26) | n. 4th quito &amp; free | NW astrology | p. 80

cross | Word (p. 2) &amp; cockroach &amp; tuesday (p. 2)

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SEPTEMBER 19, 2012

## CALM POWER



SEPTEMBER 19, 2012

## JOHN KACHALKA



SEPTEMBER 19, 2012

(The final panel here is a postcard he sent me in 1975)

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